IE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT

OF THE AGE.

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THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT OF THE AGE

AND OTHER PLEAS AND DISCUSSIONS

BY

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'BROKEN LIGHTS' 'THE HOPES OF THE HUMAN RACE'
'THE PEAK IN DARIEN' 'THE DUTIES OF WOMEN'
'A FAITHLESS WORLD' ETC.

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1888

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LONDON:
PEWTRESS AND CO., PRINTERS, LITTLE QUEEN STREET
HIGH HOLBORN.

CONTENTS.

ESSAY		PAGE
	PREFACE	v.
I.	THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT OF THE AGE	1
II.	THE EDUCATION OF THE EMOTIONS ...	35
III.	PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM	69
IV.	THOUGHTS ABOUT THINKING	111
V.	TO KNOW OR NOT TO KNOW?... ...	147
VI.	THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE	173

PREFACE.

We are all possessed of friends who, when any serious belief or matter of practical conduct is in question, take up at the outset a thesis of their own which they press on our acceptance with the best arguments at their disposal. It is a rarer privilege to enjoy the intercourse of one who does not invariably start with a ready-made opinion of what may be true, right, or expedient in the doubtful case on which we wish to consult him; but who will patiently turn over the matter with us; suggest and register the various "pros and cons;" refer to admitted principles and facts; and thus aid us to form a comprehensive judgment for ourselves, rather than induce us to accept his own. The discourse of the first order of friends is an Argument, a Plea, a Contention; that of the second, a Discussion.

In the same way, of course, an Essay may be either a Plea or a Discussion. The author may take the position of Counsel for one side or other of the case before the reader; or else he may charge as Judge, and sum up the substance of such arguments as might have been used by two advocates on the opposite sides. Either style of writing is perfectly legitimate; and each has its particular fitness and utility. Misunderstanding and perplexity

only occur when the hasty reader, (newspaper critics being signally guilty in this matter) chooses to assume that an avowedly one-sided Plea is intended for a judicial Discussion,* or treats a Discussion as a Plea for the side which the critic dislikes.

In the present little collection of Essays, written at various times and for various objects, it will be found that the first three belong to the class which I have described as Pleas, and the last three more or less to that of Discussions.

I plead that the Scientific Spirit of the Age, while it has given us many precious things, is, in its present exorbitant development, depriving us of things more precious still.

I plead that the Education of the Emotions (to be carried on chiefly through the contagion of good and noble sentiments) is an object of paramount importance, albeit nearly totally ignored in ordinary systems of education.

I plead that, in the present disintegration of all religious opinion, Judaism may yet become a progressive, and cease to be merely a tribal, faith; and that, if it absorb the moral and spiritual essence of Christianity, it may solve the great

* Several such critics, writing of the essay in this book on the *Scientific Spirit of the Age* when it appeared in the *Contemporary Review* for July, condemned me for failing to do adequate justice to Science; quite regardless of my reiterated assertions (see pp. 6, 7, 34), that I was writing exclusively on the adverse side and left the glorification of the modern Diana of the Ephesians to the mixed multitude of her followers.

problem of combining a theology consonant to modern philosophy, with a worship hallowed by the sacred associations of the remotest past.

In the last three Essays I discuss the relation of Knowledge to Happiness; I discuss the real,—as distinguished from the conventional,—character of our common processes of Thought; and, finally, I discuss the respective claims of Town and Country Life to be esteemed most healthy and felicitous for body and mind.

I shall much rejoice if I win my readers to adopt the opinions which I have advocated in the first half of the book.

I shall remain altogether indifferent as to which of the alternative views put forth in the concluding Essays may seem to them most impressive; and only congratulate myself if I shall have succeeded in setting forth in due light and order the multitudinous points which together constitute the materials for forming a sound judgment upon them.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Hengwrt, Dolgelly,
1888.

ESSAY I.

THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

That the present is pre-eminently the Age of Science is a fact equally recognised by the majority who hail it with triumph and by the minority who regard it with feelings wherein regret and apprehension have their place. As in Literature an age of production is ever followed by an age of criticism, so in the general history of human interests, War, Religion, Art start in early days and run their swift course while Science creeps slowly after them, till at last she passes them on the way and comes foremost in the race. We still in our time have War; but it is no longer the conflict of valiant soldiers, but the game of scientific strategists. We still have Religion; but she no longer claims earth and heaven as her domain, but meekly goes to church by a path over which Science has notified, 'On Sufferance Only.' We still have Art; but it is no longer the Art of Fancy, but the Art of

the Intellect, wherein the Beautiful is indefinitely postponed to the technically True, as Truth is discerned by men who think *qu'il n'y a rien de vrai excepté le laid*. All our multiform activities, from agriculture down to dress-making, are in these days nothing if not 'scientific,' and to thousands of worthy people it is enough to say that Science teaches this or that, or that the interests of Science require such and such a sacrifice, to cause them to bow their heads, as pious men of old did at the message of a Prophet; 'It is SCIENCE! Let it do what seemeth it good.' The claims of the æsthetic faculty, and even of the moral sense, to speak in arrest of judgment on matters entirely within their own spheres are ruled out of court.

By a paradoxical fatality, however, it would appear as if the obsession of the Scientific Spirit is likely to be a little lightened for us by an event which might have been expected to rivet the yoke on our necks. The recently published Life of the most illustrious and most amiable man of Science of this scientific age has suggested to many readers doubts of the all-sufficiency of Science to build up—not theories, but—men. Mr. Darwin's admirably candid avowal of the gradual extinction in his mind of

the æsthetic* and religious elements has proved startling to a generation which, even when it is ready to abandon Religion, would be direfully distressed to lose the pleasures afforded by Art and Nature, Poetry and Music. Instead of lifting the scientific vocation to the skies (as was probably anticipated) this epoch-making Biography seems to have gone far to throw a sort of dam across the stream, and to have arrested not a few Science-worshippers with the query: 'What shall it profit a man if he discover the origin of species and know exactly how earth-worms and sun-dews conduct themselves, if all the while he grow blind to the loveliness of nature, deaf to music, insensible to poetry, and as unable to lift his soul to the Divine and Eternal as was the primeval Ape from whom he has descended? Is this all that Science can do for her devotee? Must he be shorn of the glory of humanity when he is

* 'Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, gave me great delight, and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare. I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now, for many years, I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music.'—Darwin's *Life*, vol. i., p. 101.

ordained her Priest? Does he find his loftiest faculties atrophied when he has become a 'machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts'?*

While these reflections are passing through many minds it may be permitted to me to review some features of the Scientific Spirit of the Age. Frankly, I shall do it from an adverse point of view. There were many years of my life during which I regarded it with profound—though always distant—admiration. Grown old, I have come to think that many spirits in the hierarchy are loftier and purer; that the noblest study of mankind is Man, rather than rock or insect; and that, even at its best, Knowledge is immeasurably less precious than Goodness and Love. Whether in these estimates I err or am justified, it would, in any case, be superfluous for me to add my feeble voice to the glorification of the Scientific Spirit. Diana of the Ephesians was never proclaimed so vociferously 'Great;' and, perhaps, like the worshippers of the elder goddess, it may be said of those of Science, 'the most part know not wherefore they have come together.' It will suffice if I succeed in partially exhibiting how much we are in danger of losing

* *Ibid*, same page. Said of himself by Darwin.

by the Scientific Spirit, while others show us, more or less truly, what we gain thereby.

In speaking of 'Science' in this paper I must be understood to refer only to the Physical Sciences, not to the mathematical or metaphysical. The former (especially the Biological group) have of late years come so much to the front that the old application of the word to the exact sciences and to metaphysics and ethics has almost dropped out of popular use. I also desire to explain at starting that I am not so blind as to ignore the splendid achievements of modern physical science in its own realm, nor the benefits which many applications of the Scientific Spirit have brought in various other directions. It is the intrusiveness and oppression of the Scientific Spirit in regions where it has no proper work, and (still more often) its predominance in others where its place should be wholly subordinate, against which a protest appears to be needed. A score of causes have contributed in our generation to set Science up and to pull other things down. The levels need to be redressed. Time will not permit me to exhibit the results of the excessive share taken of late years by the Scientific Spirit in many practical matters wherein experience and common sense were safer guides, *e.g.*, in Agriculture.

This side of the question I must leave untouched, and limit myself to the discussion of the general influence of the Scientific Spirit in Education; in Art; in Morals ; and in Religion.

Professor Tyndall, in the Preface to his great work on '*Heat as a Mode of Motion*,' calls Science 'the noblest growth of modern times;' and adds that 'as a means of intellectual education its claims are still disputed, though, once properly organised, greater and more beneficent revolutions wait its employment here than those which have marked its application in the material world' (2nd edit., p. x). Since the publication of this book, and indeed since the opening of the Age of Science, the relative claims of Science and Literature to form the basis of *intellectual* instruction have been incessantly debated by men qualified by experience in tuition (which I cannot claim to be) to form a judgment on the subject. There has been, however, I think, too little attention given on either side to the relative *moral* influences of the two studies.

In addressing the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching on March 3 last, Sir James Paget expressed his dissent from Professor Morley's opinion (given on a similar occasion last year) that 'Literature was an

excellent, if not a better study than Science.' Sir James maintained, on the contrary, that '*nothing could better advance human prosperity than Science*,' and he elaborately set forth the specific benefits of a scientific education as he conceived them, as follows :—

There was first the teaching of the power of observing, then the teaching of accuracy, then of the difficulty of attaining to a real knowledge of the truth, and, lastly, the teaching of the methods by which they could pass from that which was proved to the thinking of what was probable.*

It would, of course, be unjust to hold Science to these definitions, as if they exhausted her claims as our instructress. It may, however, fairly be assumed that, in the view of one of the leading men of science of the day, they are *paramount*. If any much higher results than they were to be expected from scientific teaching, Sir James would scarcely have omitted to present them first or last. To what, then, do these four great lessons of Science amount ? They teach, and, I think, teach only, Observation, Accuracy,

* That organ of the Scientific party, the *British Medical Journal*, eulogising this address, remarked that 'Sir James is a master of English, clothing all his thoughts in the most elegant language.' To the mere literary mind the above definitions may be thought to leave something to be desired on the score of 'elegance.'

Intellectual Caution; and the acquirement of a Method of advancing to the *thinking of what was probable*;—possibly the method commonly known as Induction.

I must confess that these 'great truths' (as Sir James oddly calls them) represent to my mind only the culmination of the lower range of human faculties; or, more strictly speaking, the perfect application to human concerns of those faculties which are common to man and the lower animals. A fox may be an '*observer*,' and an exceedingly *accurate* one—of hen-roosts. He may be deeply sensible of '*the difficulty of attaining to a real knowledge*'—of traps. Further than this, he may even '*pass from the proved*'—existence of a pack of hounds in his cover, to '*thinking that it was probable*'—he would shortly be chased. To train a MAN it is surely indispensable to develop in him a superior order of powers from these? His mind must be enriched with the culture of his own age and country, and of other lands and ages, and fortified by familiarity with the thoughts of great souls on the topics of loftiest interest. He must be accustomed to think on subjects above those to which his observation, or accuracy of description, or caution in accepting evidence can apply; and on which (it is to be hoped) he will reach

some anchorage of faith more firm than Sir James Paget's climax of scientific culture, '*the passing from that which was proved to the thinking of what was probable.*' He ought to handle the method of deductive reasoning at least as well as that of induction; and beyond these (purely intellectual) attainments, a human education making claim to completeness should cultivate the imagination and poetic sentiment; should 'soften manners,' as the *literæ humaniores* proverbially did of old; should widen the sympathies, dignify the character, inspire enthusiasm for noble actions, and chivalrous tenderness towards women and all who need defence; and thus send forth the accomplished student a *gentleman* in the true sense of the word. The benefits attributed by Sir James Paget to Scientific education, and even those with which, in candour, we may credit it beyond his four 'great truths,' fall, I venture to think, deplorably short of such a standard of culture as this.

The deficiencies of a Scientific education do not exhaust the objections against it. There seem to be positive evils almost inseparable from such training when carried far with the young. One of the worst is the danger of the adoption by the student of materialistic views on all subjects. He need not become a theoretic

or speculative Materialist. That is another risk, which may or may not be successfully eliminated. But he will almost inevitably fall into practical materialism. Of the two sides of human life, his scientific training will compel him to think always in the first place of the lower. The material (or, as our fathers would have called it, the *carnal*) fact will be uppermost in his mind, and the spiritual meaning thereof more or less out of sight. He will view his mother's tears—not as expressions of her sorrow,—but as solutions of muriates and carbonates of soda, and of phosphates of lime; and he will reflect that they were caused,—not by his heartlessness,—but by cerebral pressure on her lachrymal glands. When she dies he will 'peep and botanise' on her grave,—not with the poet's sense of the sacrilegiousness of such ill-placed curiosity—but with the serene conviction of the meritoriousness of accurate observation among the scientifically-interesting 'flora' of a cemetery.

To this class of mind, thoroughly imbued with the Scientific Spirit, Disease is the most important of facts and the greatest of evils. Sin, on the other hand, is a thing on which neither microscope nor telescope nor spectroscope, nor even stethoscope, can afford instruc-

tion. Possibly the student will think it only a spectral illusion; or he will foresee that it may be explained by-and-by scientifically, as a form of disease. There may be discovered *bacilli* of Hatred, Covetousness, and Lust, respectively responsible for Murder, Theft, and Adultery. Already Hypocrisy is a recognised form of Hysteria. The state of opinion in 'Erewhon' may be hopefully looked for in England, when the Scientific Spirit altogether prevails.

Beside its materialising tendency a Scientific Education involves other evils, amongst which may be counted the fostering of a callous and irreverent spirit. To this I shall return presently. Of course every tendency of a pursuit, good or bad, affects the young who are engaged in it much more than the old, whose characters may have been moulded under quite opposite influences. We must wait for a generation to see the Scientific Spirit in its full development.

As to the instruction of young men and women in Physiological Science in particular, I am exonerated from treating the subject by being privileged to cite the opinions of two of the most eminent and experienced members of the scholastic profession. I do so with great thankfulness, believing that it will be a

revelation to many parents, blindly caught by scientific claptrap, to learn that such are the views of men among the best qualified in England to pronounce judgment on the subject.

The late lamented Mr. Thring, of Uppingham, wrote to me, September 6, 1886 :—

My writings on Education sufficiently show how strongly I feel on the subject of a literary education, or rather how confident I am in the judgment that there can be no worthy education which is not based on the study of the highest thoughts of the highest men in the best shape. As for Science (most of it falsely so called), if a few leading minds are excepted, it simply amounts to the average dull worker, to no more than a kind of upper shop work, weighing out, and labelling, and learning alphabetical formulæ—a superior grocer assistant's work, and has not a single element of higher mental training in it. Not to mention that it leaves out all knowledge of men and life, and therefore—is eminently fitted for life and its struggle! Physiology in its worser sense adds to this a brutalising of the average practitioner, or rather a devilish combination of intellect worship and cruelty at the expense of feeling and character. For my part if it were true that Vivisection had wonderfully relieved bodily disease for men, if it was at the cost of lost spirits, then let the body perish. And it is at the cost of lost spirits. I do not say that under no circumstances should an experiment take place, but I do say that under no circumstances

should an experiment take place for teaching purposes. You will see how decided my judgments are on this matter.

The Rev. J. E. C. Welldon, Head Master of Harrow, has been good enough to write to me as follows:—

I am most willing to let you quote my words, whether what I said before, or what I say now. You command my full sympathy in the crusade which you have so nobly declared against cruelty. I say this frankly, although I know that there is some difference between us in regard to the practice of Vivisection. But even if it be necessary that in some cases, and under strict conditions, vivisectional experiments should be made upon animals, I cannot doubt that the use of such experiments tends to exercise a demoralising influence upon any person who may be called to make them. I hold, therefore, that the educational effect of Vivisection is always injurious. Knowledge is dearly purchased at the cost of tenderness, and I cannot believe that any morally minded person could desire to familiarise the young with the sight of animal suffering. For my part, I look upon the hardness of heart with which some distinguished physiologists have met the protest raised against Vivisection as one of many signs that materialism means at the last an inversion of the ethical law, *i.e.*, a preference of knowledge to goodness, of mind to spirit, or, in a word, of human things to divine. Surely it is a paradox that they who minimise the specific distinction

between man and the animals should be the least tender in their views of animal sufferings, and that Christians who accentuate that distinction should be willing to spare animals pain at the cost of enhancing their own. I conceive it then to be a primary duty of a modern educator, at School or at College, to cultivate in his pupils, by all the means in his power, the sympathetic sentiment towards the animal world.

To turn to a less painful part of our subject. Science and Art are constantly coupled together in common parlance and in grants of public money, but if ever incompatibility of temper formed a just ground of divorce, it is surely in their case. When Science—like Poverty—comes in at the door, Art—like Love—flies out at the window. They move in different planes, and touch different parts of human nature. Science appeals to the Intellect, Art to the Emotions; and we are so constituted that our Intellects and Emotions are like buckets in a well. When our Intellects are in the ascendant our Emotions sink out of sight; when our Emotions rise to the surface, our busy Intellects subside into quiescence. It is only the idolatry of Science which could make intelligent men overlook the fact that she and Art resemble two leashed greyhounds pulling opposite ways, and

never running together unless there be some game (shall we surmise an endowment of public money ?) in view. The synthetic, reverential, sympathising spirit of Art is opposed, as the different poles of the magnet, to the analytic, self-asserting, critical spirit of Science. The artist seeks Beauty ; finds likenesses ; discerns the Ideal through the Real. The man of Science seeks Facts ; draws distinctions ; strips the Real to the skin and the bones.

A great light of the Scientific Age has been heard to say that when he first visited the Vatican he 'sat down before Raphael's Transfiguration and filled three pages of his note-book with his faults.' It was the most natural thing in the world for him to do ! How should a Physicist approve of three figures suspended in the air in defiance of the laws of gravitation ? Or what could a Zoologist say to an angel outrageously combining in his person the wings exclusively belonging to the Order *Aves*, with the arms and legs of *Bimana ?* Worst of all, what must be the feelings of a Physiologist confronted with a bas-relief of a Centaur with two stomachs, or of a Cherub with none ?

Poetry is the Art of Arts. If we desire to see what Science can do for it, let us take a typical piece wherein Fancy revels and plays like an

Ariel with wreaths of lovely tropes — say Shelley's 'Sensitive Plant' for example. We must begin by cutting out all the absurdly unscientific statements, *e.g.*, that the lily of the valley grows pale with passion; that the hyacinth rings peals of music from its bells; and that the narcissus gazes at itself in the stream. Then, in lieu of this folly, we must describe how the garden has been thoroughly drained and scientifically manured with guano and sewage. After this the flowers may be mentioned under their proper classes, as monandria and polyandria, cryptogams and phenogams. Such would be the result of bringing the Scientific Spirit to bear on Poetry. Introduced into the border-realm of Fiction, it begins by marring with pedantic illustrations the otherwise artistic work of George Eliot. Pushed further, it furnishes us with medical novels, wherein the leading incident is a surgeon dissecting his aunt. Still a step onward, we reach the brute realism, of 'A Mummer's Wife' and 'La Joie de Vivre.' The distance between Walter Scott and Zola measures that between Art and Science in Fiction.

To many readers it may appear that the antagonism of Science to Art may be condoned in favour of her high claim to be the guide, not to

Beauty, but to Truth. But is it indeed *Truth*, in the sense which we have hitherto given to that great and sacred word, at which Physical Science is now aiming? Can we think of Truth merely as a vast heap of Facts, piled up into an orderly pyramid of a Science, like one of Timur's heaps of skulls? To collect a million facts, test them, classify them, raise by induction generalisations concerning them, and hand them down to the next generation to add a few thousand more facts and (probably) to reconstruct the pyramid on a different basis and another plan — if this be indeed to arrive at 'Truth,' modern Science may boast she has touched the goal. Yet in other days Truth was deemed something nobler than this. It was the interests which lay behind and beyond the facts, their possible bearing on man's deepest yearnings and sublimest hopes, which gave dignity and meaning to the humblest researches into rock and plant, and which glorified such discoveries as Kepler's till he cried in rapture, 'O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee!' and Newton's, till he closed the 'Principia' (as Parker said of him) by 'bursting into the Infinite and kneeling there.' In our time, however, Science has repeatedly renounced all pretension to throw light in any direction beyond

the sequence of physical causes and effects; and by doing so she has, I think, abandoned her claim to be man's guide to Truth. The Alpine traveller who engages his guides to scale the summit of the Jungfrau and finds them stop to booze in the *Wirthschaft* at the bottom, would have no better right to complain than those who fondly expected Science to bring them to God, and are informed that she now never proceeds above the Ascidian. So long as all the rivulets of laws traced by Science flowed freshly onward towards the sea, our souls drank of them with thankfulness. Now that they lose themselves in the sands, they have become mere stagnant pools of knowledge.

We now turn to the influence of the Scientific Spirit on Morals.

Respecting the theory of ethics, the physico-Scientific Spirit has almost necessarily been from the first Utilitarian, not Transcendental. To Mr. Herbert Spencer the world first owed the suggestion that moral intuitions are only results of hereditary experiences. 'I believe,' he wrote in 1868 to Mr. Mill, 'that the experiences of utility, organised and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding modifica-

tions which, by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition, certain emotions responding to right and wrong conduct which have no apparent basis in the individual experiences of utility.' Mr Darwin took up the doctrine at this stage, and in his 'Descent of Man' linked on the human conscience to the instincts of the lower animals, from whence he held it to be derived. Similar instincts, he taught, would have grown up in any other animal as well endowed as we are, but those other animals would not necessarily attach their ideas of right and wrong to the same conduct. 'If, for instance, men were reared under precisely the same conditions as hive-bees, there can hardly be a doubt that our unmarried females would, like the worker-bees, think it a sacred duty to kill their brothers.' (*Descent of Man*, vol. i., p. 73.)

These two doctrines,—that Conscience is only the 'capitalised experience of the human tribe' (as Dr. Martineau has summarised Mr. Spencer), and that there is no such thing as absolute or immutable Morality but only a convenient Rule for each particular class of intelligent animals,—have, between them, revolutionised theoretic ethics; and deeply imperilled, so far as they are

accepted, the existence of human virtue. It is in vain that the plea is often entered on the side of faith that, after all, Darwin only showed *how* Conscience has been evolved,—perhaps by Divine pre-arrangement,—and that we may allow its old authority all the same. He has done much more than this. He has destroyed the possibility of retaining the same reverence for the dictates of conscience. As he himself asks: '*Would any of us trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind?* . . . . The doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are *of any value*.' (*Life*, vol. i., p. 316.) Who, indeed, can attach the same solemn authority to the monitions of the

Stern daughter of the Voice of God,

and to the prejudices of ancestors just emerging from ape-hood? It was hard enough heretofore for tempted men to be chaste, sober, honest, unselfish, while passion was clamouring for indulgence or want pining for relief. The basis on which their moral efforts rested needed to be in their minds as firm as the law of the universe itself. What fulcrum will they find henceforth in the sandheap of hereditary experiences of utility?

Thus the Scientific Spirit has sprung a mine under the deepest foundations of Morality. It may, indeed, be hereafter countermined. I believe that it will be so, and that it will be demonstrated that many of our broadest and deepest moral intuitions can have had no such origin. The universal human expectation of Justice to which all literature bears testimony, can never have arisen from such infinitesimal experience of actual Justice, or rather such large experience of prevailing injustice, as our ancestors in any period of history can have known. Nor can the 'set of our (modern) brains' against the destruction of sickly and deformed infants have come to us from the consolidated experience of past generations, since the 'utility' is all on the side of Spartan infanticide. But for the present and while Darwinism is in the ascendant, the influence of the doctrine of Hereditary Conscience is simply deadly. It is no more possible for a man who holds such a theory to cherish a great moral ambition than for a stream to rise above its source. The lofty ideal of Goodness, the hunger and thirst after Righteousness which have been the mainspring of heroic and saintly lives, must be exchanged at best for a kindly good nature and a mild desire to avoid offence.

The man of science may be anxious to abolish vice and crime. They offend his tastes and distract him from his pursuits. But he has no longing to enthrone in their place a positive virtue demanding his heart and life's devotion. He is almost as much disturbed by extreme goodness as by wickedness. Nay, it has been remarked by a keen and sensitive observer, that the companionship of a really great and entirely blameless man of science invariably proved a 'torpedo touch to aspiration.'

An obvious practical result of the present influence of Science on Morals has been the elevation of Bodily Health into the *summum bonum*, and the consequent accommodation of the standard of right and wrong to that new aim. An immense proportion of the arguments employed in Parliament and elsewhere when any question touching public health is under discussion rest on the unexpressed major premiss, 'that any action which in the opinion of experts conduces to the bodily health of the individual or of the community, is *ipso facto* lawful and right.' I cannot here indicate the conclusions to which this principle leads. Much that the Christian conscience now holds to be Vice must be transferred to the category of Virtue; while the medical profession will acquire

a Power of the Keys which it is perhaps even less qualified to use than the Successors of St. Peter.

Another threatening evil from the side of Science is the growth of a hard and pitiless temper. From whatsoever cause it arise it seems certain that, with some noteworthy exceptions, the Scientific Spirit is callous. In the mass of its literature the expressions of sympathy with civilised or savage, healthy or diseased mankind, or with the races below us, are few and far between. Men and beasts are, in scientific language, alike 'specimens' (wretched word!); and if the men be ill or dying they become 'clinical material.' The light of Science is a 'dry' one. She leaves no glamour, no tender mystery anywhere. Nor has she more pity than Nature for the weak who fall in the struggle for existence. There is indeed a scientific contempt quite *sui generis* for the 'poor in spirit,' the simple, the devoutly believing—in short for all the humble and the weak,—which constitutes of the Scientific Spirit of the Age a kind of Neo-Paganism, the very antithesis of Christianity. I may add that it is no less the antithesis of Theism, which, while abandoning the Apocalyptic side of Christianity, holds (perhaps with added consciousness of its supreme

value) to the spiritual part of the old faith, and would build the Religion of the future on Christ's lessons of love to God and Man, of self-sacrifice and self-consecration.

Prior to experience it might have been confidently expected that the Darwinian doctrine of the descent of Man would have called forth a fresh burst of sympathy towards all races of men and towards the lower animals. Every biologist now knows tenfold better reasons than St. Francis for calling the birds and beasts 'little brothers and sisters.' But instead of instilling the tenderness of the Saint of Assisi, Science has taught her devotees to regard the world as a scene of universal struggle, wherein the rule must be: 'Every one for himself; and no God for any one.'

Ten years ago an eminent American physician remarked to me: 'In my country the ardour of scientific research is rapidly over-riding the proper benevolent objects of my profession. The cure of disease is becoming quite a secondary consideration to the achievement of a correct diagnosis to be verified by a successful *post mortem*.' How true this now holds of the state of things in English hospitals that remarkable book 'St. Bernard's,' and its still more important Key, 'Dying Scientifically,'

have just come in time to testify.* No one who has read these books will deny that the purely Scientific Spirit is (at all events sometimes), a merciless spirit; and that Dr. Draper's famous boast, so often repeated, that 'Science has never subjected any one to physical torture' (Preface to '*Conflict*,' p. xi.) is untrue.

Irreverence appears to be another 'Note' of the Scientific Spirit. Literature always holds a certain attitude of conservatism. Its kings will never be dethroned. But Science is essentially Jacobin. The one thing certain about a great man of science is that in a few years his theories and books, like French Constitutions, will be laid on

* Speaking of this latter book the *Manchester Guardian* (March 17) remarked that 'the charges in *St. Bernard's* were supported by details of cases reported in medical journals and by statements made by lecturers of distinction. The quotations are precise and easily verified. The hospitals will do well to take some notice of a medical man who avers that the healing of patients is subordinated to the professional advantages of the staff and the students, that cures are retarded for clinical study, that new drugs are tried upon hospital patients, who are needlessly examined and made to undergo unnecessary operations. They cannot afford to pass over the statement that the dying are tortured by useless operations, and that the blunders of students are covered by their teachers for the credit of the hospital.' Every one of these offences against justice and humanity is directly due to the inspiration of the Scientific Spirit.

the shelf. Like coral insects, the scientists of yesterday who built the foundations of the science of to-day, are all dead from the moment that their successors have raised over them another inch of the interminable reef. The student of Literature, dealing with human life, cannot forget for a moment the existence of such things as goodness which he must honour, and wickedness which he must abhor. But Physical Science, dealing with un-moral Nature, brings no such lessons to her votaries. There is nothing to revere even in a well-balanced Solar System, and nothing to despise in a microbe. Taking this into consideration, it might have been foreseen that the Scientific Spirit of the Age would have been deficient in reverence; and, as a matter of fact, I think it will be conceded that so it is. It is a spirit to which the terms 'imperious' and 'arrogant' may not unfitly be applied, and sometimes we may add 'overbearing' when a man of science thinks fit to rebuke a theologian for trespassing on *his* ground after he has been trampling all over the ground of theology. Perhaps the difference between the new 'bumptious' Spirit of Science and the old, exquisitely modest and reverent tone of Newton and Herschel, Faraday and Lyell is only due to the causes which distinguish everywhere a

Church Triumphant from a Church Militant. But whatever they may be it seems clear that it will scarcely be in an age of Science that the prophecy will be fulfilled that 'the Meek shall inherit the earth.'*

Among the delicate and beautiful things which Science brushes away from life I cannot omit to number a certain modesty which has hitherto prevailed among educated people. The decline of decency in England, apparent to every one old enough to recall earlier manners and topics of conversation, is due in great measure, I think, to the scientific (medical) spirit. Who would have thought thirty years ago of seeing young men in public reading-rooms snatching at the *Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal* from layers of what ought

* It was long before Science acquired her natural voice. For more than a thousand years she submitted servilely to Aristotle and his interpreters. But the Science of the Dark Ages was only a branch of Learning of which a Picus of Mirandola or an Admirable Crichton could master the whole, along with the classics and mathematics of the period. The genuine Scientific Spirit was not yet born; and when it woke at last in Galileo and Kepler, and down to our own day, the Religious spirit was still paramount over the Scientific. It is only in the present generation that we witness at once the evolution of the true scientific spirit and of scientific arrogance.

to be more attractive literature, and poring over hideous diagrams and revolting details of disease and monstrosity? It is perfectly right, no doubt, for these professional journals to deal plainly with these horrors, and with the thrice abominable records of 'gynæcology.' But, being so, it follows that it is *not* proper that they should form the furniture of a reading-table at which young men and young women sit for general—not medical—instruction. Nor is it only in the medical journals that disease-mongering now obtains. The political press has adopted the practice of reporting the details of illness of every eminent man who falls into the hands of the doctors and affords those gentlemen an opportunity of advertising themselves as his advisers. The last recollection which the present generation will retain of many an illustrious statesman, poet, and soldier, will not be that he died like a hero or a saint, bravely or piously, but that he swallowed such and such a medicine, and, perhaps, was sick in his stomach. Deathbeds are desecrated that doctors may be puffed and public inquisitiveness assuaged.

So far does the materialist spirit penetrate into literature that in criticising books and men the most exaggerated importance is attached by

numberless writers to the physical conditions and 'environments' of the personages with whom they are concerned, till we could almost suppose that—given his ancestry and circumstances—we could scientifically construct the Man with all his gifts and passions. As if, forsooth, a dozen brothers were alike in character, or even all the kittens in a litter! It is refreshing to read the brisk *persiflage* on this kind of thing in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for March 1. The writer, reviewing Mr. Lecky's books, states that but little of that splendid historian's private life has been published, and adds:—

'Je ne me plains pas de cette sécheresse, je la bénis. C'est un plaisir, devenu si rare aujourd'hui, de pouvoir lire un livre sans en connaître l'auteur: de juger une œuvre directment et en elle-même, sans avoir à étudier ce composé d'organes et de tissus, de nerfs et de muscles, d'où elle est sortie: sans la commenter à l'aide de la physiologie, de l'ethnographie et de la climatologie: sans mettre en jeu l'atavisme et les diathèses héréditaires!'*

* While I am writing these pages the *Globe* informs us that there reigns at present in Paris a mania for medical curiosities and surgical operations. 'It has become the right thing to get up early and hurry off to witness some special piece of dexterity with the scalpel. The novel yields its attraction to the slightly stronger realism of the medical treatise, and the picture galleries have the air of a pathological museum. It is suggested that the theatres, if they want to hold their own, must represent critical operations in a thoroughly realistic manner on the stage.'

Turn we lastly to the influences of the Scientific Spirit on Religion. It is hardly too much to affirm that the advance of that Spirit has been to individuals and classes the signal for a subsidence of religious faith and religious emotion.* Judging from Darwin's experience, as that of a typical man of science, just as such an one becomes an embodiment of the Scientific Spirit, this religious sentiment flickers and expires, like a candle in an airless vault. Speaking of his old feelings of 'wonder, admiration and devotion' experienced while standing amidst the grandeur of a Brazilian forest, he wrote in later years when Science had made him all her own: '*Now* the grandest scenes would not cause any such convictions and feelings to rise in my mind. It may be truly said that I am like a man who has become colour-blind' (*Life*, vol. i., p. 311). Nor did the deadening influences stop at his own soul.

* In the very noteworthy paper by Mr. Myers in the *Nineteenth Century*, for May, on the *Disenchantment of France*, there occurs this remark: 'In that country where the pure dicta of Science reign in the intellectual classes with less interference from custom, sentiment, or tradition, than even in Germany itself, we should find that Science, at her present point, is a depressing disintegrating energy,'—p. 663. Elsewhere he says that France 'makes M. Pasteur her national *hero*' (!)

As one able reviewer of his 'Life' in the *Spectator* wrote: 'No sane man can deny Darwin's influence to have been at least contemporaneous with a general decay of belief in the unseen. Darwin's Theism faded from his mind without disturbance, without perplexity, without pain. These words describe his influence as well as his experience.'

The causes of the anti-religious tendency of modern science may be found, I believe, 1st, in the closing-up of that 'Gate called Beautiful,' through which many souls have been wont to enter the Temple; 2nd, in the diametric opposition of its Method to the method of spiritual inquiry, and 3rd, to the hardness of character frequently produced (as we have already noted) by scientific pursuits. These three causes, I think, sufficiently account for the antagonism between the modern Scientific and the Religious Spirits, quite irrespectively of the bearings of critical or philosophical researches on the doctrines of either natural or traditional religion. Had Science inspired her votaries with religious *sentiment*, they would have broken their way through the tangle of theological difficulties, and have opened for us a highway of Faith at once devout and rational. But of all improbable things to anticipate now in the

world is a Scientific Religious Reformation. Lammenais said there was one thing worse than Atheism, namely: indifference whether Atheism be true. The Scientific Spirit of the Age has reached this point. It is contented to be Agnostic, not Atheistic. It says aloud, 'I don't know.' It mutters to those who listen, 'I don't care.'

The Scientific Spirit has undoubtedly performed prodigies in the realms of physical discovery. Its inventions have brought enormous contributions to the material well-being of man, and it has widened to a magnificent horizon the intellectual circle of his ideas. Yet notwithstanding all its splendid achievements, if it only foster our lower mental faculties while it paralyses and atrophies the higher; if Reverence and Sympathy and Modesty dwindle in its shadow; if Art and Poetry shrink at its touch; if Morality be undermined and perverted by it; and if Religion perish at its approach as a flower vanishes before the frost—then, I think, we must deny the truth of Sir James Paget's assertion, that '*Nothing can advance human prosperity so much as Science.*' She has given us many precious things; but she takes away things more precious still.

ESSAY

II.

THE EDUCATION OF THE EMOTIONS.

THE EDUCATION OF THE EMOTIONS.

Human Emotions—the most largely effective springs of human conduct—arise either at first hand on the pressure of their natural stimuli, or at second hand by the contagion of sympathy with the emotions of other men. This last source of emotion has not, I conceive, received sufficient attention in practical systems of education, and to the consideration of it the present paper will be chiefly devoted.

Every human emotion appears to be transmissible by contagion; and to be also more often so developed than it is solitarily evolved. For once that Courage or Terror, Admiration or Contempt, or even Good-will and Ill-will, spring of themselves in the breast of man, woman, or child, each is many times *caught* from another mind possessed of the same feeling. By a subtle sympathy, not unshared by the lower animals, a sympathy which sometimes works slowly and imperceptibly and is sometimes communicated with electric velocity, one man conveys to

another as if it were a flame, the emotion which burns in his own soul. Thenceforth the recipient becomes a fresh propagator of the emotion to those with whom he in his turn comes into psychical contact. A few instances may be named to make clear my meaning.

The most familiar example of the contagiousness of the emotions, as the reader will instantly recall, is that of Fear, which has often spread through whole armies with such inexplicable celerity and fatal results that the ancients were fain to attribute the frenzy to the malevolence of a god, and called such terrors 'Panic.' The disasters which have occurred during the last few years in so many European and American theatres and churches, afford sad evidence that though 'great Pan is dead,' our liability to succumb to such waves of fear has not been diminished by modern civilization. The proof of the special power of the contagion lies in this; that there is every reason to believe that the majority of the persons constituting the terror-stricken crowd would, *if alone*, have met the danger with reasonable composure. There is also happily, we may remember, such a thing as the contagion of Courage as well as that of Terror, and many a time and oft in our history the captain of a sinking ship, the commander

of a retreating regiment, has, by his individual intrepidity, restored the *morale* of his men. Again, a remarkable instance of the contagiousness of emotion is afforded by the Popularity of the men who become in any country the idols of the hour. The fact is very well known to the organizers of *claques* and *réclames* in theatres, and of ovations in political life, that it is enough for a small band of friends in an assembly to cheer and clap hands, to induce hundreds who had previously little interest in the work or person praised, to join the hosannas. When a statesman has succeeded in arousing enthusiasm for himself (possibly by persuading scores of people and associations that 'all his sympathies are with their'—totally opposite—aims), he may then safely disappoint each in turn and veer round to the opposite point of the political and theological compass from which he sailed with flowing canvas. His popularity will not be forfeited or even lessened, for it is a mere contagion of sentiment, not a rational or critical judgment. Herein lies the special peril of democracies, that this kind of contagion of personal enthusiasm rapidly becomes the largest factor in their politics. From the nature of things the masses cannot form judgments on questions of state, referring, perhaps, to countries

of which the very names are unknown to them, and therefore they must of necessity choose Men, not Measures. When we further examine who are the Men so chosen, and why, we arrive at the startling discovery that it is exclusively *by rhetoric* that the contagious admiration and sympathy of the masses can be roused. Not sound statesmanship, not wise patriotism, not incorruptible fidelity, not dignified consistency, not, in short, any one quality fitting a man to be a safe or able minister, attracts the enthusiasm of the multitude, or is even estimated at all by them. The only gift they can appreciate is that which they themselves would designate —'the *Gift of the Gab*.' The lesson is a grave one for all free countries. By such popular idolatry of great talkers were all the old republics of Greece and Magna Græcia brought to destruction; and the men who by such means acquired a bastard royalty over them so exercised it as to make the name of 'Tyrant' for ever abominable.

As concerns emotions connected with Religion, the contagion of them has been notorious in all ages, for good or evil, according to the character of the religion in question. The intoxication of the dances of old Mænads and modern Dervishes; the shrieks and self-woundings of

the priests of Baal and Cybele; the frenzied scenes of sacrifice to Moloch and the Aztec gods, and a hundred other examples will occur to every reader. Probably those on the largest scale of all recorded in history were the first Crusades, when 'Europe precipitated itself on Asia' in a delirium of religious enthusiasm caught from Peter the Hermit and Bernard of Clairvaux. The outbursts of the Anabaptists, the Flagellants and Prophets of the Cevennes, in Christendom, and of Moslem fanatics under Prophets and Mahdis (of which we have probably by no means heard the last), and finally the Revivals of various sects in England and America, and the triumphs of the Salvation Army, are all instances of the part played by the contagion of emotion in the religion of the community at large. I shall speak hereafter of its share in personal religious experience.

In much smaller matters than religion, and where no explosion reveals the contagion of sentiments, it is yet often possible to trace the spread of an emotion, good or bad, from one individual of a family or village to all the other members or inhabitants. It suffices for some spiteful boy or idle girl to call a miserable old woman a witch, or to express hatred of some foreigner or harmless eccentric, to set afloat

prejudices which end in something approaching to persecution of the victims, who may be thankful they did not live two hundred years ago, when, instead of being boycotted, they would have been burned. A child in a school or large household who has the misfortune to be lame or ugly, or to exhibit any peculiarity physical or mental, may, without any fault on his side, become obnoxious to the blind dislike of a stupid servant or jealous step-mother, and then—the contagion spreading and intensifying as it extends—to the common hatred of the little community; a hatred justifying itself by the sullenness or deceptions to which the poor victim at last is driven. Even domestic animals suffer from this kind of contagious dislike, and benefit on the other hand by contagious admiration and fondness.* 'Give a dog a bad name and hang him' is true in more senses than one.

* I have heard a pitiful example of this kind of prejudice. An orphan boy and his ugly mongrel dog were the objects of universal dislike and ridicule in the house of his uncle, a Scotch farmer. The lad always sat of an evening far back from the circle by the fireside, with his crouching dog under his stool lest it should be kicked. One day the little son of the house, of whom the farmer and his wife were dotingly fond, went out with the boy and dog, and a snowstorm coming on they were all lost on the hills. Next morning

We need not pursue this part of the subject further. Every day's experience may supply fresh illustrations of the immense influence of contagion in the development of all human emotions. Nor is it by any means to be set down as a weakness peculiar to or characteristic of a feeble mind, to be blindly susceptible of such contagion. Even the strongest wills are bent and warped by the winds of other men's passions, persistently blowing in given directions. Original minds, gifted with what the French call *l'esprit primesautier*, are perhaps, indeed, affected rather more than less than commonplace people by the emotions of those around them, because their larger natures are more open to the sympathetic shock. Like ships with all sails set, they are caught by every breeze. It is a question of degree how *much* each man receives of influence from his neighbours; but (to use the new medical

the dog returned to the farm making wild signs that the farmer should follow him, which he and his wife did at once in great anxiety. At last the dog brought them to a spot where they found the boy stiff and cold, but their child still alive. The boy had taken off his own coat and wrapped it round the child, whom he laid on his breast, and then, lying under him on the snow, had died. Let us hope that at least the dog reaped some tardy fruits of the farmer's repentance.

barbarism) we are never 'immune' altogether from the contagion.

We may now approach our proper subject of the Education of the Emotions, carrying with us the important fact, that no means are so efficacious in promoting good ones as the wise employment of the great agency of Contagion; and further, that this contagion works only by exhibiting the genuine emotion to the person we desire to influence. Only by being brave can we inspire courage. Only by reverencing holy things can we communicate veneration. Only by being tender and loving can we move other hearts to pity and affection.

Let us glance over the variety of circumstances wherein great good might be effected by systematic attention to the natural laws of the development of the emotions. We may begin by considering those connected with the education of the young.

In the first place, parents duly impressed with the importance of the subject would carefully suppress, or at least conceal, such of their own emotions as they would regret to see caught up by their children. At present numberless sufficiently conscientious fathers and mothers, who would be horrified at the suggestion of

placing books teaching bad lessons in the hands of their sons and daughters, yet carelessly allow them to witness (and of course to receive the contagion of) all manner of angry, envious, cowardly, and scornful emotions, just as they chance to be called out in themselves. It would be to revolutionize many homes to induce parents to revise their own sentiments, with a view to deciding which they should communicate to their children. In one way in particular the result of such self-questioning might be startling. Every good father desires his son to respect his mother, and would be sorry to teach him only the half of the Fifth Commandment—*in words*. Yet how do scores of such well-meaning men set about conveying the sentiment of reverence which they recognise will be invaluable to their sons? They treat those same mothers, in the presence of those same sons, with such rudeness, dismiss their opinions with such levity, and, perhaps, exhibit such actual contempt for their wishes, that it is not in nature but that the boy will receive a lesson of disrespect. His father's feelings, backed up as they are by the disabilities under which the Constitution places women, can scarcely fail to impress the young mind with that contempt for women in general, and for

his mother in particular, which is precisely the reverse of chivalry and filial piety.

Almost as important as the contagion of parental emotion is that of the sentiments of Teachers; yet on this subject nobody seems to think it needful even to institute inquiries. So far as I can learn, the sole question asked nowadays when a professor is to be appointed to a Chair at the Universities is, 'Whether he be the man among the candidates who knows most (or rather who *has the reputation* of knowing most) of the subject which he proposes to teach?' This point being ascertained, and nothing serious alleged against his moral conduct, the fortunate gentleman receives his appointment as a matter of course. Even electors who personally detest the notorious opinions of the professor on religion or politics, acquiesce cheerfully in the choice; apparently satisfied that he will carve out to his students the particular pound of knowledge he is bound to give them, and not a drop of blood besides. The same principle, I presume (I have little information on the subject), prevails in schools generally, as it does in private education. A professor or governess is engaged to instruct boys or girls, let us say in Latin, History, or Physiology, and it is assumed that he or she will act precisely

like a teaching machine for that particular subject, and never step beyond its borders. A little common sense would dissipate this idle presumption ;—supposing it to be really entertained, and that the mania for cramming sheer knowledge down the throats of the young does not make their elders wilfully disregardful of the moral poison which may filter along with it. Every human being, as I have said, exercises some influence over the emotions of his neighbour; but that of a Teacher, especially if he be a brilliant one, over his students, often amounts to a contagion of enthusiasm throughout the class. His admirations are adored, the objects of his sneers despised, and every opinion he enunciates is an oracle. And it is these professors and teachers, forsooth, whose opinions on ethics, theology, and politics it is not thought worth while to ascertain before installing them in their Chairs to become the guides of the young men and women who are the hope of the nation !

It does not require any direct, or even indirect, inculcation of *opinion* on the teacher's part to do mischief. It is the contagion of his emotions which is to be feared, if those emotions be base or bad. Let him teach History and betray his enthusiasm for selfish and sanguinary conquerors, or justify assassins and anarchists, or

jest—Gibbon fashion—at martyrs and heroes; will he not communicate those base sentiments to his young audience? Or let him teach Science, and convey to every student's mind that deification of mere knowledge, that insolent sense of superiority in the possession of it, that remorseless determination to pursue it regardless of every moral restraint, which is too often the 'note' of modern scientism; — will the instruction he affords to his student's brains counterbalance the harm he will do to their hearts?

And, on the other hand, what a splendid vantage-ground for the dissemination not merely of knowledge, but of elevated feelings, is that of a Teacher! Merely in teaching a dead or modern language, a fine-natured man communicates his own glowing feelings respecting the masterpieces of national literature which it is his duty to expound.

The last point we need notice as regards the contagion of emotions among the young is the subject of Companions. Here again, as in the case of respect for mothers, there is great unanimity in theory. Every one admits that bad companions are ruinous for boys or girls. But when it comes to taking precautions against the herding of innocent and well-nurtured children

with others who have been familiar with vice, I see little trace of the anxious care and discrimination which ought to prevail. Nay, in the case of the children of the poor, it seems to me the law is often wickedly applied to compel good parents to send them, against their own will and convictions, to sit beside companions who have come straight to school out of slums of filth, moral and physical. I have known Americans argue that it is right for children of all classes to associate together, so that the well-trained may communicate good ideas to the ill-trained. The reasoning appears to be on a par with a proposal to send healthy people to sleep in a cholera hospital. But while we allow ourselves to be terrified beyond bounds by alarms about the infection of bodily disease, we take hardly any precautions against the more dreadful, and quite as real, infection of moral corruption.*

* I will cite an example from my own experience which may help to make parents realise the subtle peril of which I speak. Twenty-five years ago I was engaged in an effort to help Mary Carpenter in the care of the Red Lodge Reformatory for girl-thieves at Bristol. Our poor little charges had all been convicted of larceny, or some kindred offence, but they were not technically 'fallen' girls; another establishment received young women of this 'unfortunate' class. Twice, however, it happened during my residence with Miss

The general sentiments of boys and youths in the great public schools and colleges of England—thanks to the high-minded Masters who have been at their head—is, on the whole, good and honourable. It may be taken for granted that a boy from Harrow, Eton, Rugby, Winchester, Westminster, or Uppingham, and *à fortiori*, a man from Oxford or Cambridge, will despise lying and cowardice and admire fair play and justice. How grand a foundation for national character has thus been laid! What a debt do we owe alike to the Masters and the *Tom Browns* who have communicated the contagion of such noble emotions! In Continental *lycées* and academies public opinion among the boys is, by all accounts, woefully inferior to that which is current in our great schools. There has never been an Arnold in a French Rugby.

Carpenter, that girls who had been on the streets were by mistake sent to us when convicted of theft, and were of course received and placed with the others, all being under the most careful surveillance both in the schoolrooms, playgrounds, and dormitory. Nevertheless, in each case, before the 'unfortunate' had been three days in the Lodge, by some inexplicable contagion the whole school of fifty girls were demoralised so completely that the aspect of the children and change in their behaviour gave warning to their experienced janitress to trace the history of the new-comer more exactly, and, as the result proved, to detect where the infection had come in.

As regards girls, their doubly emotional natures make it a matter of moral life and death that their companions (of whose emotions they are perfectly certain to experience the contagion) should be pure and honourable-minded. It is most encouraging to every woman who reads Mrs. Pfeiffer's masterly new book, *Women and Work*, to see the rising generation of girls displaying such splendid abilities and zeal for instruction, and —as Mrs. Pfeiffer amply proves —without paying for it in loss of bodily vigour. Fain would I see the 'blessed Damozels,' who are still standing behind the golden bars of noble homes, all flocking to the new colleges for women, as their brothers do to Christchurch and Trinity, there to imbibe parallel sentiments of truthfulness and *pluck;* more precious than Greek, Latin, or mathematics!

Leaving now the subject of the Education of the Emotions of the Young, by parents, teachers, and companions, I proceed to speak of the general education of the emotions of the community by public and private instrumentality; a wide field over which we can only glance. What machinery is disposable to cultivate the better and discourage the lower emotions, either by the exhibition of the direct natural stimulus

to the former and withdrawal of it in the latter cases, or by the aid of contagion?

In the grand matter of Legislation I do not know that there is much more to be done than has already been achieved by the abolition of those public punishments of criminals—hanging, drawing and quartering, flogging at the cart's tail, and the pillory—which must have been frightfully prolific of cruel passions in the spectators. To have taken part in such executions, *e.g.* in the old stonings to death, in the burning of witches and heretics, or in the minor, but yet barbarous and cowardly pelting of the helpless wretches in the pillory, must have been an apprenticeship worthy of a Red Indian. Even to have been a passive spectator of a Newgate execution in later years, amid the yelling crowd, must have been excessively demoralising; and in fact was at last recognised by the Legislature to be so, instead of a wholesome warning. It is a cause for rejoicing that there is an end of this kind of contagious emotion in England, except in the case of experiments on animals, of which the Act of 1876 sanctions the exhibition to classes under special certificates which require the subjects to be fully anæsthetised. On this point the warning of the late lamented Professor

Rolleston ought, I think, to have sufficed. He told the Royal Commission, 'The sight of a living, bleeding, and quivering organism most undoubtedly does act in a particular way upon what Dr. Carpenter calls the emotiono-motor nature in us. . . . When men are massed together the emotiono-motor nature is more responsive, it becomes more sensitive to impression than it does at other times, and that of course bears very greatly on the question of interference with vivisections before masses.' (*Minutes*, 1287.*) The time will come when it will be looked upon as a monstrous inconsistency that the spectacle of the execution of murderers should be shut off from the *adult population on account of its recognised ill effects in fostering contagious cruelty*, and, at the same time, as many as nineteen certificates should be issued in one year by the Home Office, specially

* In Dr. Ingleby's just published Essays there is a very pertinent story from St. Augustine concerning this contagion of the emotion of cruelty. A certain Alypius detested, on report, the spectacle of the Gladiators, but was induced to enter the amphitheatre, protesting that he would not look at the show: 'So soon as he saw the blood,' says St. Augustine, 'he therewith drank down savageness; nor turned away, but fixed his eye, drinking in pleasure unawares, and was delighted with that guilty fight, and intoxicated with the bloody pastime; nor was he now the man he came, but one

authorizing the mutilation of harmless animals *before classes of young men and women.*

Majestic public functions, coronations, thanksgivings, State entries into great cities, and funerals of distinguished men, afford admirable machinery for the communication of noble emotions through the masses. It was worth the cost and trouble of last year's Jubilee ten times over to have sent through so many brains and hearts the thrill of sympathy which followed the Queen to the old throne of her fathers, while the kings of the earth stood around her as witnesses that she had kept the oath to her people, sworn there fifty years before. For one day England and all her vast colonies beat with one heart, and the contagion of loyal emotion, love, reverence, pride, and pity, for woman, empress, mother, widow, ran round the

of the throng he came into.'—*St. Augustine's Confessions*, Bk. vi., c. 8. Similar perversions occur at all brutal exhibitions. A friend sends me the following instance from his own knowledge. 'A party of English people went to the Bull Ring at San Sebastian. When the first horse was ripped up and his entrails trailed on the ground, a young lady of the party burst into tears and insisted on going away. Her brothers compelled her to remain; and a number of horses were then mutilated and killed before her eyes. Long before the end of the spectacle the girl was as excited and delighted as any Spaniard in the assembly.'

globe. Sad was it (as many must have remembered) that he who would have found the true words to give utterance to the sentiment in the heaving breast of the nation, he whose proud duty it would have been to welcome the Queen to his own Abbey, was lying on that day silent beneath its pavement.

Beyond Legislation and Public Functions, the largest influence which sways the emotions of all educated people is undoubtedly Literature. The power of Books to awaken the most vivid feelings is a phenomenon at which savages may well wonder. The magic which enables both the living and the long departed to move us to the depths of our being by the aid only of a few marks on sheets of paper is a never-ending miracle. It were vain to attempt to do any justice to the subject, or show how the contagion of piety, patriotism, enthusiasm for justice and truth, and sympathy with other nations and other classes than our own, is borne to us in the pages of the poets and historians and novelists of the world. Pitiful it is to think how narrow must be the scope of the emotions of any man whose breast has never dilated nor his eyes flashed over the grandeur of the book of Job, over Dante or Shakspeare, and whose heart has never been warmed and his

sympathies extended, backwards through time and around him in space, by Walter Scott, and Defoe, and Dickens, and George Eliot. Alas! that we must add that Literature can not only kindle the noblest emotions, but also light up baleful fires, of the basest and most sensual;—to look for which we have not now even to cross the Channel. M. Zola has been translated into English.

After Literature I presume that the Stage is the greatest public agency for the promotion of fine emotions, and it is to the honour of human nature that it is found (at least in our country) to be most popular when it fulfils its office best, and calls out sympathy for generous and heroic actions. When the Roman audience rose *en masse* to applaud the line of Terence which first proclaimed the brotherhood of man: 'Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto,'—the highest mission of the Drama was fulfilled. Of course no one desires the string of high emotion to be exclusively or perpetually harped upon; and for my own part I think that the mere production of the emotion of harmless merriment is one of the greatest boons of the stage. The contagion of laughter, in a theatre or out of it, is an altogether wholesome and beneficent thing. How it unseats black Care

from our backs! How it carries away, as on a fresh spring breeze, a whole swarm of buzzing worries and grievances! How it warms our hearts for ever after to the people with whom we have once shared a good honest *fou rire!* 'Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,' and (with all respect let us add) in hilarity! A good joke partaken with a man is like the Arab's salt. Our common emotion of humorous pleasure is a bond between us which we would not thereafter lightly break.

The education of the emotions of actors and actresses, apart from that which they afford to the emotions of the public, is a very curious subject of consideration. Great part of the training of an actor consists in learning to give the uttermost possible external expression to those emotions which it is the task of other people to reduce to a vanishing point. Undoubtedly (as one of the most gifted of the profession has remarked) the 'habit of representing fictitious feeling tends to produce a superficial sensibility, and an exaggerated mode of expressing the same.' But it may be questioned whether this extreme be worse than the opposite, wherein the expression of the emotions is so effectually repressed that the feelings them-

selves die out for want of air and exercise—a consummation not unknown in the reposeful 'caste of Vere de Vere.'

Beside Literature and the Stage, Music no doubt is a most marvellous agency for calling out Emotion. It is, in fact, the Art of Emotion. The musician plays with the strings of the human heart while he touches those of his instrument. Since Collins wrote his *Ode to the Passions* and Pope his *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, there is no need to describe how every emotion known to man may be brought out by music. Something may well be hoped for a generation which, rejecting the more trivial and sensuous music of Italy, finds delight in the exalted play of the emotions which follows the wands of Bach and Beethoven and Wagner. The efforts now made to offer music at once cheap and good to as many of the working classes as can be found to enjoy it, is perhaps the most direct way conceivable of fostering their best emotions.

The Beauty of Nature and of Art are also powerful levers of the higher emotions, which it becomes us to use for the benefit of our fellows whenever it is practicable to do so.

But while these varied engines are at work to stir beneficently the emotions of the masses,

there are on the other hand certain agencies in full play amongst us which have, I fear, a totally different effect; which in fact can only tend to deaden, if not destroy, the most precious of emotions, those of family affection. I do not know that the question has ever been faced; What are the *moral* effects of our enormous Hospitals? From the side of the bodily interests of the patients they may be wholly advantageous.* But as regards the sacred institutions of the Family, on which society itself is based, I ask what, except evil, can result from the habitual separation of relatives the moment that illness makes a claim for tenderness and care?

It is the law of human nature that the sentiment of sympathy should be drawn forth by personal service to the suffering; and feelings of gratitude and affection by the receipt of such personal service. In comparison of these sources of emotion, those which act in times of prosperity are weak and poor. If we substract in imagination from our own affections those which have come to us either through nursing

* Readers of that singular book, *St. Bernard's* (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 1887, new edition 1888), and its sequel, 'Dying Scientifically,' may possibly entertain doubts on this subject.

or being nursed in sickness and danger, the residue will represent all which we leave within reach of the million. Many of us can remember quarrels which have been reconciled, unkindnesses atoned for, and bonds of sacred union in faith and eternal hope linked beside beds of pain when death seemed standing at the door. These things form some of the highest educational influences which Providence brings to bear on the human spirit, and out of them arise the sweetest affections, the warmest gratitude, the most vivid sense of a common nearness to God and the Immortal Life.

And of all this the entire working class of the nation is systematically deprived! Formerly it was only in cases of extreme poverty, where the crowded lodging was an altogether unfit place to nurse the sufferer, that recourse was had to the public Hospitals. Now it has become the invariable practice the moment that illness, even of non-infectious kind, declares itself, to send straight away to the hospital artisans, small tradesman and farmers from their own comfortable abodes, servants from the large and airy houses where they have laboured faithfully, and even children from their mother's arms. It is not a mere matter of conjecture that such a custom must do harm

and weaken the sense of family obligation. It is a fact that it has done so already, and is doing so more every day. Sons and daughters place their blind and palsied parents in asylums ; wives send their husbands in a decline to Brompton Hospital, and it has become a surprising piece of filial devotion if a daughter remain at home to take care of a bedridden mother, even when her means fully permit of such sacrifice of time. What deadly injury is all this to the hearts of men, women and children !

Of course Hospitals have their important uses. No one denies it. Some cases of disease and some degrees of poverty require such institutions. But this does not justify the monstrous over-use of them now in vogue. Even for the class whose homes are too crowded to admit of nursing being properly or safely done in them, I cannot but think that small Cottage Hospitals, where the wife or mother or daughter would be free to perform her natural duties by the bedside, and where she would be shown how best to perform them, would be infinitely preferable for every reason, moral and physical, to our present Palaces of Pain. Excellent also in all ways will be the plan of Nurses provided for the poor in their own homes by the Queen's wise gift of

the balance of her Women's Jubilee Fund. The secret of the excessive resort to Hospitals is of course the encouragement to patients given by the medical schools attached to them, for the sake of obtaining a large supply of 'clinical material.'

Lastly, we come to speak of the Education of the Religious Emotions. We have already referred to the outbursts of contagious enthusiasm in the Crusades and Revivals. It remains to say a few words respecting the various sources of religious emotion, at first and second hand.

A fundamental difference between the Catholic and Puritan mind seems to be that the former seizes on every available means for producing religious emotion *through the senses;* the latter turns away from such means with intense mistrust, and limits itself to appeals *through the mind.* Dark and solemn churches like that at Assisi decorated by Giotto (which the friar who showed it told me was the 'best place in the whole world for prayer') gorgeous altars, splendid functions, pictures, music, incense—all these are to the Catholic and High Churchman veritable 'means of grace,' *i.e.* they call out in them emotions which either are religious,

or they think lead to religion. Long Prayers, Hymns, Bible-readings, and preachings; these, on the other hand, are the Evangelicals' means of grace, and they produce in them emotions distinctly religious. We must, I think, treat these differences as matters of spiritual *taste* concerning which it is proverbially idle to dispute. Both have their advantages and both their great perils: the Catholic method has the peril of lapping the soul in a fool's paradise of fancied piety which is only sensuous excitement; the Puritan method has that of creating the hysteria of a Revival. In each case it is the contagion of *the emotion of a multitude* which creates the danger. Solitary religious emotion, either produced by the glory and majesty of Nature or by lonely prayer and communings with God, can lead to no evil; nay, is the climax of purest joy vouchsafed to man. Not misguided are those who enter into their chambers and shut the door 'to pray to Him who sees in secret;' or who go up into the hills and woods

> to seek
> That Being in whose honour shrines are weak,
> Upreared by human hands.

The converse of the emotions of Awe and Reverence, namely the tendency to jest and

ridicule, are supposed by some to be dangerous enemies to religion. I do not believe they are so. I think a genuine sense of humour and a keen eye for the ludicrous is a most precious protection against absurdities and excesses. Like Tenderness and Strength, the sense of the Sublime and of the Ridiculous are complementary to each other, and exist only in perfection together in the same character. It is the man who cannot laugh who never weeps.

Finally, we reach the point where the religious emotions, produced either alone or by contagion, effect the greatest of spiritual miracles: that 'conversion' or revulsion of the soul which ancient India, no less than Christendom, likened to a New or Second Birth. It would appear that when this mysterious change does not take place by the solitary work of the Divine on the human spirit, it does so by the attractive power of another human soul, which has itself already undergone the great transformation. It is the *living* Saint who conveys spiritual *life*. He need not be a very great or far-advanced soul in the spiritual realm. Many a simple person with no exceptional gifts has 'turned to the wisdom of the just' the hearts of strong men, whom the most eloquent and thoughtful of preachers have failed to move by a hair. But the greater the

saint, the greater naturally must be his power. It was the contagion of Divine Love, caught from Him who felt it most of all the sons of men, which moved the little band in the upper chamber in Jerusalem—who moved the world.

It is worthy of notice that when a man so powerfully influences another as to 'convert' him in the true sense, *i.e.*, to bring him to the higher spiritual life, it very often happens that at the same time he 'converts' him in the lower sense, to the doctrines of the special Church to which he himself belongs. The man has received the impulse of religion from that particular direction. It has come to him coloured by the hues of his friend's piety, and he accepts it, doctrines and all, as he finds it. The matter has been one of emotional contagion, not of critical argument on either side.

It is impossible to form the faintest estimate of the good—the highest kind of good—which a single devout soul may accomplish in a lifetime by spreading the holy contagion of the Love of God in widening circles around it. But just as far as the influence of such men is a cause for thankfulness, so great would be the calamity of a time, if such should ever arrive, when there should be a dearth of saints in the world, and the fire on the altar should die down. A Glacial

Period of Religion would kill many of the sweetest flowers in human nature; and woe to the land where (as it would seem is almost the present case in France at this moment) the priceless tradition of Prayer is being lost, or only maintained in fatal connection with outworn superstitions.

To resume the subject of this paper. We have seen that the Emotions, which are the chief springs of human conduct, may either be produced by their natural stimuli, or conveyed by contagion from other minds, but that they can neither be *commanded* nor *taught*. If we desire to convey good and noble emotions to our fellow-creatures, the only means whereby we can effect that end is by filling our own hearts with them till they overflow into the hearts of others. Here lies the great truth which the preachers of Altruism persistently overlook. It is better to *be* good than to *do* good. We can benefit our kind in no way so much as by being ourselves pure, and upright, and noble-minded. We can never *teach* Religion to such purpose as we can *live* it.

It was my privilege to know a woman who for more than twenty years was chained by a cruel malady to what Heine called a 'mattress grave.'

Little or nothing was it possible for her to do for any one in the way of ordinary service. Her many schemes of usefulness and beneficence were all stopped. Yet merely by attaining to the lofty heights of spiritual life and knowledge, that suffering woman helped and lifted up the hearts of all who came around her, and did more real good, and of the highest kind, than half the preachers and philanthropists in the land. Even now, when her beautiful soul has been released at last from its earthly cage, it still lifts many who knew her to the love of God and Duty to remember what she was; and to the faith in Immortality to think what now she must be—within the golden gates.

ESSAY

III.

PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM.

PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM.

When the new 'Science of Religions' has been further developed, it will probably be recognized that the character of each is determined, not only by its own proper dogmas but by those of the religion which it has superseded. Men do not, as they often imagine, tear up an old faith by the roots and plant a new one on the same ground. They only cut across the old and graft the new on its stem. Thus it comes to pass, for example, that much of the sap of Roman Paganism runs through the pores of Latin Christianity; and much of that of Odin worship through those of Teuton and Scandinavian Protestantism. Still more certainly does the faith held by an individual man in his earlier years dye his mind with its peculiar colour, so that no subsequent conversion ever wholly obliterates it, but makes him like a frescoed wall on which yellow has been painted over blue, leaving as the result—green. The tint of Anglican piety may be discerned even beneath a pervert Cardinal's scarlet robe.

A Romish acolyte, transformed into the most brilliant of sceptical essayists, still boasts that the ecclesiastical set of his brain enables him 'alone in his century' to understand Christ and St. Francis.* A Jew, baptized and become Prime Minister of England, wrote novels and made history altogether in the vein of the author of the Book of Esther. Beneath the wolf's clothing of the whole pack of modern Secularists, Agnostics, and Atheists, friction reveals (for the present generation, at all events) a flock of harmless Christian sheep.

For this reason hasty efforts to fuse religious bodies which happen to manifest tendencies to doctrinal agreement seem predestined to failure. Much else beside mere readiness to pronounce similar symbols of faith is needed to gather men permanently into one temple. Amalgamation attempted prematurely can only result in accentuating those diversities of sentiment which have stronger power to dissever than any intellectual affinities have charms to unite. Ecclesiastical schisms are infinitely easier to effect than ecclesiastical coalitions.

Nevertheless, the levelling of the fences which have for ages kept men of different religions

* 'C'est pourquoi, seul dans mon siècle j'ai sû comprendre Jésus Christ et St. François d'Assise.'—*M. Renan.*

apart is, *per se*, a matter for such earnest rejoicing that we may well exult at any instance of it, independently of ulterior hopes or projects. Especially must our sympathies with those who are thus clearing the ground be quickened when the faith to be dis-immured is an old and venerable one, the nearest of all to our own; a faith whereof any important modification must be fraught with incalculable consequences to the civilized world. The new Reform among the Jews is emphatically such a movement—an effort to throw down the high and jealous walls behind which Judaism has kept itself in seclusion. The gates of the Ghettos which for a thousand years shut in the Jews at night in every city in Europe, were not more rigid obstacles to social sympathy and intercourse than have been the nation's own iron-bound prejudices and customs. But just as these Ghettos themselves, so long 'little provinces of Asia dropped into the map of Europe,' have been thrown open at last by the growing enlightenment of Christian States, so the Jewish moral walls of prejudice are being cast down by the advanced sentiment of cultured Jews.

It is the speciality of the higher religions to unfold continually new germs of truth, while

the lower ones remain barren and become overgrown with the rank fungi of myth and fable. I do not speak now of the results of external influences bearing on every creed, and tending to vivify and fructify it. Such influences have done much, undoubtedly, even for Christianity itself which has been stirred by all the agencies of the Saracen conquests, the classic Renaissance, modern ethics and metaphysics, modern critical science, and at last in our time by the extension of the theological horizon over the broad plains of Eastern sacred literature. I am speaking specially of the prolific power of the richer creeds to go on, generation after generation, bringing forth fresh golden harvests like the valleys of California. If we look for an instance of the opposite barrenness, we shall find it in the worn-out religions of China, ice-bound and arid as the desolate plains and craters of the moon; the Tae-ping rebellion having been perhaps a solitary development of heat caused by the impingement on them of the orb of Christianity. If, on the other hand, we seek for a supreme instance of fertility we find it in the religion of Nazareth, which seems to enjoy perpetual seed-time and perpetual harvest.

The question is one of more than historical

interest: Is Judaism likewise a religion capable of bearing fresh corn and wine and oil for the nations? We know that both Christianity and Islam are developments of the Jewish idea; the Semitic development (Islam) carrying out its monotheistic doctrine in all its rigidity, but losing somewhat on the moral and spiritual side: the Aryan development (Christianity) abandoning the strictly monotheistic doctrine, but carrying far forward the moral and the spiritual part. But both these Banyan-like branches have struck root for themselves, and their growth can no longer be treated as derived from the trunk of Judaism. Our problem is: Can Judaism further develop itself along its own lines? Or is it (as generally believed) destined to permanent immobility, with no possible future before it save gradual dismemberment and decay? Shall we best liken it to Abraham's oak at Mamre, whose leaf has not failed after three thousand years of sun and storm, and when the very levin-bolt of heaven has blasted its crown,—or to the hewn and painted mast of some laden argosy wherein float the fortunes of Israel?

There are, it would appear, three parties now existing among modern Jews. There is, first, the large Orthodox party, which holds by the

verbal inspiration of the Old Testament and the authority of the Talmud.*

Secondly, there is the party commonly called that of Reformed Jews, which separated about forty years ago from the Orthodox by a schism analogous to that which cut off the Free Kirk from the Kirk of Scotland. The *raisons d'être* of this reform were certain questions of ritual (the older ritual having fallen into neglect), and the relinquishment by the reforming party of the authority of the Talmud. The progress so effected occasioned great heartburnings—now happily extinguished—and proceeded no further than these very moderate reforms.†

* The heads of this party in England are the venerable Rabbi Nathan Adler and his son and colleague, Rev. Herman Adler, who hold a kind of Patriarchate over all English Orthodox Jews. The principal synagogue of this party (to which the Rothschild family hereditarily belongs, also the Cohens, Sir G. Jessel, &c.) is in Great Portland Street. The *Eglise mère* is in the City, and there are many other synagogues belonging to it scattered over London and England. The Portuguese branch of the Orthodox party (the most rigidly Orthodox of all), to which Sir Moses Montefiore belonged, has its chief synagogue in Bevis Marks. The late distinguished Rabbi Artom, brother of Cavour's private secretary, was minister of this synagogue.

† The Reformed Jews, amongst whom Sir Julian Goldsmid and Mr. F. D. Mocatta hold distinguished places, have only

Lastly, there is a third Jewish party, existing chiefly in Germany and America, and numbering a few members amongst the younger generation in England. For convenience' sake, I shall distinguish it from the older Reformed party by calling it the party of the New Reform, or of Broad Church Jews, the analogy between its attitude towards Orthodox Judaism and that of the late lamented Dean Stanley and his friends to the Church of England, being singularly close.

The attitude even of the Orthodox and older Reformed Jews (alike for our present purpose) is, theoretically, not wholly unprogressive, not necessarily purely tribal. They have admitted principles inconsistent with stagnant tribalism. They believe that though the *ceremonialism* of Judaism is for Jews alone, yet the mission of Judaism is to spread through all the nations its great central *doctrine* of the Unity of God. As Philipsohn (who, it is said, has since somewhat receded from his position) observed in his Lectures so far back as 1847 :—

one synagogue in London, that in Berkeley Street. The minister of this wealthy and important congregation is the Rev. D. Marks. A special liturgy, differing chiefly from the Orthodox by omissions of Talmudic passages, is in use in this synagogue.

'Judaism has never declared itself to be in its specific form the religion of all mankind, but has asserted itself to be the religion of all mankind in and by the religious idea. . . . . Talmudism itself admits that he even who no longer observes the law, but who utters as his confession of faith the words "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God the Eternal is One," may be considered still to be a Jew.'—*Development of the Religious Idea*, p. 256.

The saying of the Talmud: 'The pious among all nations shall have a place in the world to come,' has become a stock quotation, and has been of the utmost value to modern Jewish orthodoxy. Thus even this most conservative party among the Jews is not without a certain expansive principle. It must be admitted, however, that it does little or nothing to make that principle practically efficacious, and is content to wait for the advent of Messiah to convert the nations by miracle without any trouble to Jews to strive to enlighten them beforehand. Considering what the Jews for ages have had to bear from those who vouchsafed to try to convert *them*, we may pardon this lack of zeal for proselytism as far from unnatural; yet the consequences have been deplorable. He who holds a precious truth concerning eternal things, and fails to feel it to be (as Mrs. Browning says) 'like bread at sacrament,' to be passed on to those beside him,

loses his right to it, and much of his profit in it. It is 'treasure hid in a field.' The attitude is anti-social and misanthropic of a people who practically say to their neighbours: 'We possess the most precious of all truths of which we are the divinely commissioned guardians and witnesses. But we do not intend to make the smallest effort to share that truth with you, and generations of you may go to the grave without it for all we care. We are passive witnesses, not active apostles. By and by, the Messiah will appear and convert all who are alive in his time, whether they will or not; but for the present Christendom is joined to idols, and we shall let it alone.' The faith which speaks thus stands self-condemned. If a creed be not aggressive and proselytizing, like Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, it confesses either mistrust of itself or else misanthropic indifference to the welfare of mankind. Thus the Orthodox and the elder Reformed Jews have tacitly pronounced their own sentence.

Turn we now from these to the new Reformation. This last is a development of Judaism, truly *on its own lines* but yet extending far beyond anything contemplated by the elder bodies. To measure it aright we must cast back a glance over the path which Judaism traversed in earlier

times and note how completely this new and vast stride is a continuance of that march towards higher and wider religious truth.

From the earliest conception of Jahveh as the Tribal God,—a conception which even Kuenen admits to be native to the race of Israel, and untraceable to any other people,—from this conception, which plainly assumed the existence of other and rival gods of neighbouring nations, it was an enormous step in advance to pass to the idea of One only Lord of all the earth, whose House should be a 'House of prayer for all nations.'

Still vaster was the progress from anthropomorphic and morally imperfect ideas of the character of the tribal God, to the adoration of Isaiah's 'High and Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity,' who dwells in the high and holy place with the pure in heart and the contrite.

Again, there was made a bound forward by Judaism when the earlier simple secularism and disbelief of, or difference to, a future world vanished before the belief in Immortality, which grew up in spite of the teachings of Antigonus and Sadok, and (after the Dispersion) never faded out again altogether.

And finally, with the development of the Prophetic spirit, Worship assumed more its true

forms of praise, confession of sin, and thanksgiving; and, at the fall of Jerusalem, the bloody sacrifices (long limited to the sacred enclosure) came to an end for ever amid the smoking ruins.

These were truly great steps of progress made by Israel of old. But the last of them left the nation to carry into its sorrowful exile an intolerable burden of ceremonialism and dusty superstitions, whereof the Talmud is now the lumber-room; and possessed also by an unhappy demon of anti-social pride, which forbade it to extend to, or accept from other nations the right hand of human brotherhood. The Jews did not go out from Jerusalem as the little band of Christian missionaries had gone, eager to scatter their new wealth of truth among the nations; and, though stoned and crucified by those whom they sought to bless, yet ever after by their children's children to be revered and canonized. The Jews went out as misers of truth holding their full bags of treasure hid in their breasts. Nor in the ages following the Dispersion, while Christianity diverged further and further from pure Theism, and through Mariolatry and Hagiolatry sank well-nigh to polytheism and idolatry, do we ever once hear of an attempt by any Jewish teacher, even by such a man as Maimonides, to call back the

wandering nations by proclaiming in their ears the 'schema Israel'—'THE LORD YOUR GOD THE ETERNAL IS ONE.' Before the expulsion from Palestine, for a brief period, Judaism (as one of its bitterest enemies has remarked) showed promise of becoming a proselytizing creed, 'when under the influence of Greek philosophy and other liberalizing influences it was tending from the condition of a tribal to that of a universal creed. But Plato succumbed to the Rabbins. Judaism fell back for eighteen centuries into rigid tribalism; and, as Lord Beaconsfield cynically said of it, has ever since "no more sought to make converts than the House of Lords."' *

At last the long pause in the progress of Judaism, considered as a religion, seems drawing to an end, and we may hail its present advance as the continuance of that noble march which the Jewish race began to the music of Miriam's timbrel.

This last step forward of Reformed Judaism consists, according to its latest interpreter, in 'the struggle now consciously and now unconsciously maintained to emancipate the Jewish faith from every vestige of tribalism, and to enshrine its wholly catholic doctrines in

* Professor Goldwin Smith, in the *Nineteenth Century*.

a wholly catholic form.' This end is to be pursued through the 'DENATIONALIZATION of the Jewish religion, by setting aside all the rules and ceremonies which do not possess an essentially religious character or are maintained merely for the sake of the national, as distinct from the religious, unity.'

The following are the modes in which this programme may be followed out:—

1. Reformed Judaism abandons the Messianic hope. It neither desires nor expects the coming of Messiah, and the re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine as a nation it regards as retrogression towards tribalism.* 2. It rejects the theory of the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament, nor does it recognise the perfection and immutability of the law contained within the Pentateuch. 3. It rejects the theory of a Divine tradition recorded in the Mischna, and does not admit the authority of the Talmudic laws. 4. It

* It will be noticed that nothing can be further apart than these ideas of a Reformed Judaism from those put forward by George Eliot in *Daniel Deronda*. Equally remote are they from the crude endeavour to return to a supposed primitive Judaism through the 'worship of the letter' of the Old Testament, which was hailed some years ago with premature satisfaction by a certain school of Protestant Christians. See the interesting 'History of the Karaite Jews,' by the Rev. W. H. Rule, D.D., 1870.

puts aside as no longer binding all the legal, hygienic, and agrarian ordinances of the Pentateuch, together with the laws relating to marriages and to the Levites. 5. It cuts down the feasts and fasts to the Sabbath, the Passover, and four others. 6. It adopts the vernacular of each country for a larger or smaller part of the service of the synagogue, instead of retaining the whole in Hebrew.

Beside these six great changes there are two others looming in the distance. Reformed Judaism still regards the rite of circumcision as binding, though several distinguished reformers (notably Geiger) have recommended that proselytes should not be required to adopt it. Of the change of the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday, I am informed that the transference of the holy day has already been made by one synagogue in Berlin, which holds its services on the Sunday, and by many independent Jewish men of business; and that it is very much desired in some other quarters. The difficulty attendant on this change obviously is; that it would prove so favourable to the interests of Jews in a secular sense that, if adopted, the charge of worldly motives is certain to be brought against those who advocate it.

These, then, in brief, are the negations of Reformed Judaism. On the positive side, it

reaffirms those dogmas which are the kernel of Judaism:—'the Unity of God; His just judgment of the world; the free relation of every man to God; the continual progress of humanity; the immortality of the soul; and the Divine election of Israel' (understood to signify that the Jews, under the will of God, possess a specific religious mission not yet entirely fulfilled). As to the observances of Reformed Judaism, the framework of life and habit under which it proposes to exist, 'they will remain distinctively Jewish, and must not bear the mere stamp of nineteenth century religious opinion.' The Jewish Reformer thus, like many another Radical, is an aristocrat at heart, and shrinks from descending to the level of a *parvenue* faith. In my humble judgment, he is entirely right in his decision. So long as he places the interests of truth and honesty above all, he cannot do better than hold fast by everything which reminds himself and the world of his pedigree through a hundred generations of worshippers of Jehovah.

The extent to which such reformation as that now sketched prevails at this hour amongst Jews is difficult to ascertain. The movement has been going on for some time and yet counts but a moderate number of adherents,

chiefly, as I have said, German and American Jews. Nay, what is most unhopeful, the disease of religious indifference, that moral phylloxera which infests the choicest spiritual vineyards, is working its evil way amongst the broader-minded Jews, as it works (we know too well) amongst the broader-minded Christians. To unite depth of conviction with width of sympathy has ever been a rare achievement. 'Tout comprendre sera tout pardonner,' may be rendered in intellectual matters, 'to find truth everywhere is to contend for it nowhere.'

There is good room to hope, however, that if some fall out of the ranks, the Reformed party will yet possess enough energy, vigour, and cohesion to make its influence ere long extensively felt.

It is a startling prospect which has been thus opened before us. If anything seemed fixed in the endless flux of nations and religions, it was the half-petrified religion of the Jew. That the stern figure which we have beheld walking alone through the long procession of history, should come at last and take a place beside his brothers is hard to picture. We live in a time when—

> Faiths and empires gleam,
> Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

Every solid body is threatened with disintegration, and the new powers of cohesion, if such there be, have scarcely come into play. But of all changes fraught with momentous consequences none could well be more important than that of a stripping off of its tribal gaberdine by Judaism, and the adoption of 'a law fit for law universal.' The old fable is realized. The wind and hail of persecution blew and pelted the Jew for a thousand years, and he only drew his cloak closer around him. The sunshine of prosperity and sympathy has shone upon him, and lo! his mantle is already dropping from his shoulders.

For the present we can only treat the matter as a grand project, but we may endeavour to estimate the value of a Reformation of Judaism, such as Luther accomplished for Christianity. In the first place, it is, I conceive, the sole chance for the permanent continuance of the Jewish religion that it should undergo some such regeneration. If the proposed Reform perish in the bud, Orthodox Judaism will doubtless survive for some generations, but according to the laws which govern human institutions its days must be numbered. In former times when every nation in Europe held aloof from its neighbours in fear and jealousy, it

was possible for alien tribes, like the Jews and gipsies, to move among all, holding rigidly to their own tribal alliances and observances; hated and mistrusted indeed, but scarcely more so than their Christian next-door neighbours. But now that Christian nations are all blending together under the influence of perpetual intercourse, and their differences of belief, governments, costumes, habits and ideas are effacing themselves year by year, the presence of a non-fusing, non-intermarrying, separatist race—a race brought by commerce into perpetual friction with all the rest,—becomes an intolerable anomaly.

For once Mr. Goldwin Smith was in the right in this controversy, when he remarked that 'the *least* sacred of all races would be that which should persistently refuse to come into the allegiance of humanity.'

The Jews have shown themselves the sturdiest of mankind, but the influences brought to bear on them now are wholly different from those which they met with such stubborn courage of old. Political ambition, so long utterly closed to them, but to which Lord Beaconsfield's career must evermore prove a spur; pleasure and self-indulgence, to which their wealth is an ever ready key; the scepticism and materialism

of the time, to which their acute and positive minds seem to render them even more liable than their contemporaries,—these are not the elements out of which martyrs and confessors are made. A reformed, enlightened, world-wide creed, which a cultivated gentleman may frankly avow and defend in the *salons* of London, Paris, Berlin, or New York, and in the progress of which he may feel some enthusiasm,—a creed which will make him free to adopt from Christianity all that he recognizes in it of spiritually lofty and morally beautiful,—such a creed may have a future before it of which no end need be foreseen. But for unreformed Judaism there can be nothing in store but the gradual dropping away of the ablest, the most cultured, the wealthiest, the men of the world and the men of the study—the Spinozas, the Heines, the Disraelis — and the persistance only for a few generations of the more ignorant, fanatical, obscure and poor.

Again, besides giving to Judaism a new lease of life, the Reform projected would undoubtedly do much to extinguish that passion of *Judenhasse* which is the disgrace of Eastern Christendom, and the source of such manifold woes to both races. The root of that passion is the newly

awakened sense (to which I have just referred) of impatience at the existence of a nation within every nation, having separate interests of its own and a solidarity between its members, ramifying into every trade, profession and concern of civil life. Were this solidarity to be relinquished, and the mutual secret co-operation of Jews* reduced to such natural and fitting friendliness as exists between Scotchmen in England, and were it to become common for Jews to marry Christians and discuss freely with Christians their respective views,—were this to happen, mutual respect and sympathy would very quickly supersede mutual prejudice and mistrust. After two generations of such Reformed Judaism the memory of the difference of race would, I am

* As an example of this I can mention the following fact. All the Jewish Journals in Germany (amounting to nine out of ten of all the newspapers in the country) support a certain cruel practice. And why? It has nothing to do with religion, nothing to do with finance, nothing to do with any matter wherein Jews have a different interest from other people. The key to this mystery is simply that seven or eight of the most guilty persons are Jews. This 'clandestine manipulation of the press' and tribe-union for purposes disconnected with tribal interests, constitutes a *cabal*, and necessarily creates antagonism and disgust. Nothing of this kind can be laid at the door of English Jews, and it is much to be wished that they would expostulate with their brethren on its embittering effects abroad.

persuaded, be reduced to that pleasant interest wherewith we trace the ancestry of some of our eminent statesmen to 'fine old Quaker families,' or remark that some of our most brilliant men of letters have in their veins the marvellous Huguenot blood.*

It is superfluous to add that the Jewish people, thus thoroughly adopted into the comity of European nations, and Judaism recognized as the great and enlightened religion of that

* I cannot but think that too much has been made, particularly under the influence of the modern mania for 'heredity,' of the exceptional character of the Jewish race. Of course the Jews are a most remarkable people, so vigorous physically as to be able to colonize either India or Greenland, and after a thousand years of Ghetto existence to remain (to the confusion of all sanitation-mongers) the healthiest race in Europe. On the mental side, their multifarious gifts and their indomitable sturdiness are no less admirable. But their fidelity to their race and religion is not unmatched. Not to speak of the miserable Gipsies, the Parsees offer a more singular spectacle for their members have always been a handful compared to the Jews (not above 150,000 at the utmost), and during the ten ages of their exile they have exhibited a spirit of concession towards the customs of their neighbours which has left the actual dogmas of their religion the sole bond of their national integrity. They worshipped the One good God under the law of Zoroaster three, perhaps four milleniums ago, and they worship Him faithfully still, though a mere remnant of a race, dwelling in the midst of idolators, and with no distinctive badge like circumcision, no haughty disdain of

powerful and ubiquitous race, the true mission of Judaism, as taught by Bible and Talmud—that of holding up the torch of monotheistic truth to the world—would begin its practical accomplishment. The Latin nations in particular, to whom religion has presented itself hitherto in the guise of ecclesiasticism and hagiolatry, and who are fast verging into blank materialism as the sole alternative they know, would behold at last, with inevitable respect, a

' Gentile ' nations, no hope of a restoration to their own land. Their priests have been illiterate and despised, not erudite and honoured rabbis. Their sacred books have twice become obsolete in language, and incomprehensible both to clergy and laity. Their Prophet has faded into an abstraction. But their faith in Ahura Mazda, the ' Wise Creator,' the ' Rich in Love,' remains as clear to day amongst them as when it first rose upon the Bactrian plains in the morning of the world. The virtues of truth, chastity, industry and beneficence inculcated by the Zend Avesta, and attributed by the Greek historians to their ancestors of the age of Cyrus, are still noticeable among them in marked contrast to their Hindoo neighbours; as are likewise their muscular strength and hardy frames. Even as regards their commercial aptitudes, the Parsees offer a singular parallel to the Jews. The *Times* remarked some years ago, that out of the 150,000 Parsees there were an incredible number of very wealthy men, and six actual millionaires. One of the last, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejebhoy, gave away in his lifetime the sum of £700,000 sterling in charities to men of every religion.

simple and noble worship, at once historical and philosophic, without priestly claims and utterly at war with every form of monasticism and superstition. The impression on these, and even on the Northern nations, of such a spectacle could not be otherwise than elevating and possibly, in the Divine order of the world, might be the means whereby the tide of faith, so long ebbing out in dismal scepticism, should flow once more up the rejoicing shores.

Even if this be too much to hope, I cannot doubt that many Christian Churches would draw valuable lessons from the presence amongst them of a truly reformed Judaism. Especially in these days of irreverence, of finikin Ritualism on one side, and Salvation Army rowdyism on the other, it would be a measureless advantage to be summoned to revert in thought to the solemn and awe-inspired tone of Hebrew devotion which still breathes in the services of the synagogue. It has been a loss to Christians as well as to Jews that these services have hitherto been conducted in Hebrew.* Had the synagogue services in London been conducted in the English language, I believe that many of the popular

* The congregations use Prayer-books with the vernacular in parallel columns.

misapprehensions concerning Judaism would never have existed, while the impression of profound reverence which the prayers convey would have reacted advantageously on Christian worship—too liable to oscillate between formalism and familiarity.*

I am bound to add, on the other side, that it appears to me there are some very great advantages on the side of Christianity of which it behoves reforming Jews to take account. These are not matters of dogma but of sentiment; and not only may they be appropriated by Jews without departing by a hair's breadth from their own religious platform, but they may every one be sanctioned (if any sanction be needed for them) by citations from the Hebrew Scriptures themselves. The great difference between Judaism and Christianity on their moral and spiritual sides, in my humble judgment, lies in this; that the piety and charity, scattered like grains of gold through the rock of Judaism, were by Christ's burning spirit fused together, and cast

* I refer especially to the magnificent services for the Day of Atonement as used in the Reformed Synagogue. There are also many noble prayers in the collection of Sabbath and other services for various festivals. The whole liturgy is majestic, though somewhat deficient as regards the expression of spiritual aspiration.

into golden coin to pass from hand to hand. Jews have continually challenged Christians to point to a single precept in the Gospel which has not its counterpart in the Old Testament. They are perhaps in the right, and possibly no such isolated precept can be found differentiating the two creeds; but both by that which is left aside, and by that which it chose out and emphasized, Christianity is, practically, a new system of ethics and religion.

To these three things in Christianity I would direct the attention of Jewish reformers: —

The Christian idea of love to God.

The Christian idea of love to Man.

The Christian sentiment concerning Immortality.

For the first, far be it from me to wrong the martyr race by a doubt that thousands of Jews have nobly obeyed the First Great Commandment of the Law (given in Deuteronomy vi. 4, as well as repeated by Christ) and 'loved the Lord their God with all their heart and soul and strength,' even to the willing sacrifice of their lives through fidelity to Him. The feelings of loyalty entertained by a Jew in the old days of persecution to the 'God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob' must have been often a master-passion, as fervid as it was deep-rooted. But alongside

of this hereditary loyalty to the God and King of Israel, there might well grow somewhat of that tender personal piety which springs from the Evangelical idea of God as holding personal relations with each devout and forgiven soul.

Of the two theories of religion—that which starts with the idea of a Tribe or Church, and that which starts with the unit of the individual soul,—Judaism has hitherto held the former. It has been essentially a corporate religion ; and to be 'cut off from the congregation,' like Spinoza, has been deemed tantamount to spiritual destruction. It is surely time that Reformed Judaism should now adopt the far higher theory of religious individualism, and teach men to seek those sacred private and personal relations with the Lord of Spirits which, when once enjoyed, cause the notions of any mere corporate privileges to appear childish. Had the deep experiences which belong to such personal piety been often felt by modern Jews (as they certainly were by many of the old Psalmists), it could not have happened that modern Jewish literature should have been so barren as it is of devotional works and of spiritual poetry. To a serious reverential spirit (a sentiment far above the level of that of the majority of Christians)

Jews too rarely join those more ardent religious affections and aspirations which it is the glory of Christianity to inspire in the hearts of her saints. Had they known these feelings vividly and often, we must have had a Jewish Thomas à Kempis, a Jewish St. Theresa, a Jewish Tauler, Fénélon, Taylor, Wesley. It will not suffice to say in answer that Jews did not need such treatises of devotion and such hymns of ecstatic piety, having always possessed the noblest of the world in their own Scriptures. Feelings which really rise to the flood do not keep in the river-bed for a thousand years.

Again, the Christian idea of Love to Man possesses an element of tenderness not perceptible in Jewish philanthropy. Jews are splendidly charitable, not alone to their own poor, but also to Christians. Their management of their public and private charities has long been recognized as wiser and more liberal than that of Christians at home or abroad. They are faithful and affectionate husbands and wives; peculiarly tender parents; pious children; kindly neighbours. The cruel wrongs of eighteen centuries have neither brutalized nor embittered them. Well would it be if whole classes of drunken, wife-beating Englishmen would take example in these respects from

them! But of certain claims beyond these, claims always recognized by Christian teachers, and not seldom practically fulfilled by Christian men and women—the claims of the erring to be forgiven, of the fallen to be lifted out of the mire—Jews have hitherto taken little account. The parable of the Lost Sheep is emphatically Christian; and among Christians only, till quite recently, have there been active agencies at work to seek and save ruined women, drunkards, criminals, the 'perishing and dangerous classes.'* Mary Magdalene did well to weep

* So rapidly moves the world, that since this Essay was first published, a whole systematic work of charity of this specially Christian character has been established by benevolent Jewish ladies in London. I have before me the *Report of the Jewish Ladies' Association for Prevention and Rescue Work*, for 1886-1887—printed for private circulation. The President of the Association is Lady Rothschild, the Hon. Secs. Mrs. Cyril Flower and Mrs. J. L. Jacobs. Nothing can seem more wisely kind and merciful than the whole scheme as here detailed. We are told that the poor Jewish girls reclaimed from a life of vice (into which, only of late years, have many been known to fall), 'are taught, not only to follow the observances of their faith, but also to lead pure and useful lives, and no pains will be spared to make them better women as well as capable earners of their own livelihood. . . . . The Committee feel convinced they will not be allowed to fail in their strenuous endeavour to bring back those who are, as it were, sunk in moral death, to a *new life*.'

over the feet of Jesus Christ. It was Christ who brought into the world compassion for her, and for those like her. And for the forgiveness of enemies also, the Christian spirit, if not absolutely unique, is yet supreme. The very core of the Christian idea fitly found its expression on the Cross, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' That divinest kind of charity which renounces all contests for rights, and asks not what it is *bound* to do, but what it may be *permitted* to do, to bless and serve a child of God—that charity may, I think, justly be historically named Christian. Of course, every pure Theism is called on to teach it likewise.

With regard to women the attitude of Judaism is peculiar. It has always recognized some 'Rights of Women,' and has never fallen into the absurdity of cherishing mental or physical weakness in them as honourable or attractive. As Mrs. Cyril Flower (then Miss Constance de Rothschild) showed in an interesting article published some years ago, the 'Hebrew Woman,' so magnificently described in the last chapter of Proverbs, has always been the Jewish ideal: 'Strength and honour are her clothing. She openeth her mouth with wisdom.' No jealousy, but on the contrary, joyful

recognition, awaited in each age the vigorous actions of Miriam and Deborah, of Judith and Esther, and of the mother of the seven martyrs in the Book of Maccabees. Jewish marriages (till quite recently formed always on Eastern rather than on the Western system) are proverbially faithful and affectionate; and the resolution of Jews never to permit their wives to undertake labour outside their homes (such as factory work and the like) has undoubtedly vastly contributed to the health and welfare of the nation. Yet, notwithstanding all this, something appears to be lacking in Jewish feeling concerning women. Too much of Oriental materialism still lingers. Too little of Occidental chivalry and romance has yet arisen. In this respect, strange to say, the East is prose, the West poetry. The relations of men and women, above all of husband and wife, cannot be ranked as perfect till some halo of tender reverence be added to sturdy goodwill and fidelity.*

And beyond their human brethren and sisters, Christians have found (it is one of those late developments of the fertile Christian idea of which I have spoken) that the humbler races of

* See this affectingly brought out in that charming book, 'The Jews of Barnow.'

living creatures have also claims upon us—moral claims founded on the broad basis of the right of simple sentiency to be spared needless pain; religious claims founded on the touching relation which we, the often-forgiven children of God, bear to 'the unoffending creatures which He loves.' This tender development of Christianity, and the discovery consequent on it, that 'he prayeth well who loveth well both man, and bird, and beast,' is assuredly worthy of the regard of those Reformers who would make Judaism an universal religion. Semitic literature has hitherto betrayed a hardness and poverty on this side which it is needful should now be remedied, if Judaism is to ride on the full tide of Aryan sympathies.

And, lastly, the Christian sentiment concerning Immortality deserves special attention from Reforming Jews. The adoption of the dogma of a Future Life has scarcely even yet, after some fifty generations, imprinted on the Jewish mind the full consciousness of

> That great world of light which lies
> Behind all human destinies.

Jews have, it would appear, essentially the *esprit positif*. They are content to let the impenetrable veil hang between their eyes and the future world — that veil which the Aryan

soul strives impatiently, age after age, to tear away, or on which it throws a thousand phantasms from the magic-lanthorn of fancy. Millions of Christians have lived with their 'treasures' truly placed in that world where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. Especially have the bereaved amongst us dwelt on earth with their hearts already in heaven where their beloved ones await them. To too great an extent, no doubt, has this 'other-worldliness' been carried, especially amongst ascetics; but on the whole, the firm anchorage of Christian souls beyond the tomb has been the source ef infinite comfort and infinite elevation. Of this sort of projection of the spirit into the darkness, this rocket-throwing of ropes of faith over the deeps of destruction, whereby the mourner's shipwrecked soul is saved and reinstated—the Jewish consciousness seems yet scarcely cognizant. Perhaps these days of pessimism and mental fog are not those wherein anyone is likely to find his faith in immortality quickened. As Dr. Johnson complained that he was 'injured' by every man who did not believe all that he believed, so each of us finds his hope of another life chilled by the doubts which, like icebergs, float in the sea of thought we are traversing.

But for those Jews who thorougly accept the dogma of immortality, it would surely be both a happiness and a source of moral elevation to give to such a stupendous fact its place in the perspective of existence. There is infinite difference between the mole-like vision which sees nothing beyond the grass-roots and the worms of earth, though dimly aware of a world of sunlight above, and the eagle glance which can measure alike things near and afar; between the man who counts his beloved dead as lost to him because he beholds and hears and touches them no more, and the man who can say calmly amid his sorrow :—

> Take them, thou great Eternity!
> One little life is but a gust,
> Which bends the branches of thy tree,
> And trails its blossoms in the dust.

Turning now from the results on Judaism itself and on Christianity at large, of a great Jewish Reformation, we may indulge in some reflections on the possible bearings of such an event on that not inconsiderable number of persons who, all over Europe, are hanging loosely upon, or dropping silently away from, the Christian Churches. I am not speaking of those who become Atheists or Agnostics, and

renounce all interest in religion, but of those who, like Robert Elsmere, pass into phases of belief which may be broadly classed under the head of Theism. These persons believe still in God and in the life to come, and hold tenaciously by the moral and spiritual part of Christianity, perhaps sometimes feeling its beauty and truth more vividly than some orthodox Christians who deem the startling, miraculous, and 'apocalyptic' part to constitute the essence of their faith. But this 'apocalyptic part,' and all which Dr. Martineau has called the 'Messianic mythology,' they have abandoned. Of the number of these persons it is hard to form an estimate. Some believe that the Churches are all honeycombed by them, and that a panic would follow could a census of England be taken in a Palace of Truth. Not a few in the beginning and middle of this century quitted their old folds, and under the names of 'Unitarians,' 'Free Christians,' and 'Theists,' have thenceforth stood confessedly apart.* But of late

* A clever book, exhibiting great acquaintance with current phases of opinion, appeared a few years ago, offering by its title some promise of dealing with the case of the Christian Theists of whom I am speaking. The author proposes to discuss 'Natural Religion,' but he shortly proceeds to describe a great many things which, in the common

years the disposition to make any external schism has apparently died away. The instinct, once universal, to build a new nest for each brood of faith seems perishing amongst us. The Church-forming spirit, so vigorous of old in Christianity and in Buddhism, is visibly failing, and making way for new phases of development, of which the Salvation Army may possibly afford us a sample. Among cultivated people subtle discrimination of differences and fastidiousness as regards questions of taste, are indefinitely

language of mankind, are not *religious* at all,—scientific ardour, artistic taste, or mere recognition of the physical order of the universe—and to urge that these, or nothing, must constitute the religion of the future. The Israelites who had gazed up in awe and wonder at the rolling clouds on Sinai, from whence came the thunders and voices, and the stern and holy Law, and were immediately afterwards called on to worship a miserable little image of a calf, and told, 'These be Thy Gods, O Israel!' might, one would think, have felt the same sense of bathos which we experience when we are solemnly assured that these sciences and arts *are* henceforth our 'Religion.' A drowning man proverbially catches at straws, and people who feel themselves sinking in the ocean of Atheism seize on every spar which comes under their hands, and cry, 'We may float yet awhile by this.' No one can blame them for trying to do so; but it is rather hard to expect all the world to recognize as an ironclad the hencoop on which they sit astride.

Among the 'Natural Religions,' as he is pleased to call them, of which he has brought us intelligence (some of

stronger than that desire for a common worship which, in the breasts of our forefathers, who 'rolled the psalm to wintry skies,' and dared death merely to pray together, must have mounted to a passion. Englishmen generally still cling to public worship, but it is chiefly where an ancient liturgy supplies by old and holy words a dreamy music of devotion, into which each feels at liberty to weave his own thoughts. Wherever the demand is made for prayers which shall definitely express the faith

which are not natural, and none of which are properly Religions), the author of this book has disdained to mention that ancient but ever new form of opinion which in former days went by the name of Natural Religion. The words were not happily selected, and belong indeed to an archaic theological terminology. But they were understood by everybody to mean, *not* the recognition of the virtues of physical science, nor admiration of fine scenery, nor enthusiasm for art, nor recognition of natural laws, for all these things had names of their own. But it was understood to mean the recognition and worship of a super-mundane, intelligent, and righteous *Person*—in other words, of GOD. It contemplated God 'mainly above Nature,' *not* (as the author of this book says must henceforward be done) 'mainly in Nature' ('Natural Religion,' p. 160). For admirable pictures, however, of the modern Artist,—who would rather have painted a good picture than have done his duty,—and of the modern Man of Science—who, 'consumed by the passion of research,' finds 'right and wrong become meaningless words,' —see p. 120.

and aspirations of the modern-minded worshipper, there the subtleties and the fastidiousness come into play, and instead of being drawn together, men sorrowfully discover that they are made conscious by common worship of a hundred discrepancies of opinion, a thousand disharmonies of taste and feeling. In all things we men and women of the modern Athens are, not 'too superstitious,' but too critical; and in religion, which necessarily touches us most vitally, our critical spirit threatens to paralyze us with shyness. The typical English gentleman and lady of to-day are at the opposite pole of sentiment in this respect from the Arab who kneels on his carpet on the crowded deck for his evening orison, or of the Italian *contadina*, who tells her beads before the wayside Madonna. Doubtless, here is one reason among many why such multitudes remain without any definite place in the religions of the land. They hang languidly about the old hive, feebly humming now and then but feeling no impulse to swarm, and finding no queen-spirit to lead them to another home where they might build their proper cells and make their own honey.

But whether embodied in any religious sect or Church, or hanging loosely upon one, the persons of whom we have been speaking, as

believers in God and in the spiritual—but not the apocalyptic side of Christianity,—*Christian Theists*, as we may best call them,—are of course nearer in a theological point of view than any others to those Reformed Jews, whom we may call *Jewish Theists*. The intellectual creeds of each, in fact, might, without much concession on either side, be reduced to identical formulæ. Now Christian Theists have hitherto wanted a rallying point, and have been taunted with the lack of any historic basis for their religion. Why (it will be asked by many) should not this Reformed Judaism afford such a rallying-point, and the old rocky foundations laid by Moses support a common temple of Christian and Jewish Theism ?

It may prove that such a consummation may be among the happy re-unitings and reconstructions of the far future. But for the present hour, and for the reasons I have given in the beginning of this paper, I do not believe it can be near at hand. I am also quite sure that it would be the extreme of unwisdom to hamper and disturb the progress of Reformed Judaism along its own lines by any hasty efforts at amalgamation with outsiders, who would bring with them another order of religious habits and endless divergencies of opinion.

Let Reformed Judaism re-light the old golden candlestick, and set it aloft, and it will give light unto all which are in the house—not only the House of Israel, but in the House of Humanity. A glorious future may in God's Providence await such purified, emancipated Judaism. It is true it may not exhibit the special form of religion which one party or another amongst us altogether desires to see extended in the world. Some radical reformers who sympathize in its general scope would wish to find it stripping off altogether its Jewish character, and torn up from the root of Mosaism. Many more, orthodox Christians, will undervalue it, because it shows no indication of a tendency to adopt from Christianity such doctrines as the Trinity, the Incarnation, or the Atonement, even while on the spiritual side it is imbued with the essential ideas of him whom it will doubtless recognize as the great Jewish Rabbi and Prophet, Jesus of Nazareth. But it is not for us to seek to modify, scarcely even to criticize, such a movement as this. A respectful interest, and a hopeful sympathy seem to me the only sentiments wherewith Christians and Christian Theists should stand aside and watch this last march forward of that wondrous patriarchal faith, whereof Christianity itself is the first-born son, and Islam the younger;

and which now in the end of the ages prepares to cross a new Jordan, and take possession of a new Holy Land.

⁂ NOTE.—It is proper to mention, in republishing this essay at the desire of Jewish friends, that it was received on its first appearance with the utmost possible disfavour by the Jewish press.

ESSAY IV.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THINKING.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THINKING.

Endless books have been written about the Laws of Thought, the Nature of Thought, and the Validity of Thought. Physiologists and metaphysicians have vied with one another to tell us in twenty different ways how we think, and why we think, and what good our thinking may be supposed to be as affording us any real acquaintance with things in general outside our thinking machine. One school of philosophers tells us that Thought is a secretion of the brain (*i.e.*, that Thought is a form of Matter), and another that it is purely immaterial, and the only reality in the universe—*i.e.*, that Matter is a form of Thought. The meekest of men 'presume to think'—this, that, and the other; and the proudest distinction of the modern sage is to be a 'Thinker,' especially a 'free' one. But with all this much-a-do about Thought, it has not occurred to any one, so far as I am aware, to attempt a fair review of what any one of us thinks in the course of the twenty-four hours; what are the number of

separable thoughts which on an average pass through a human brain in a day; and what may be their nature and proportions in the shape of Recollections, Reflections, Hopes, Contrivances, Fancies, and Reasonings. We are all aware that when we are awake a perpetual stream of thoughts goes on in 'what we are pleased to call our minds,' sometimes slow and sluggish, as the water in a ditch; sometimes bright, rapid, and sparkling, like a mountain brook; and now and then making some sudden, happy dash, cataract-wise over an obstacle. We are also accustomed to speak as if the sum and substance of all this thinking were very respectable, as might become 'beings endowed with the lofty faculty of thought;' and we always tacitly assume that our thoughts have logical beginnings, middles, and endings—commence with problems and terminate in solutions—or that we evolve out of our consciousness ingenious schemes of action, or elaborate pictures of Hope or Memory. If our books of mental philosophy ever obtain a place in the Circulating Libraries of another planet, the 'general reader' of that distant world will inevitably suppose that on our little Tellus dwell a thousand millions of men, women, and children, who spend their existence, as the interlocutors

in Plato's Dialogues passed their hours under the grip of the dread Socratic elenchus, arguing, sifting, balancing, recollecting, hard at work as if under the ferule of a schoolmaster.

The real truth about the matter seems to be that, instead of taking this kind of mental exercise all day long, and every day, there are very few of us who ever do anything of the kind for more than a few minutes at a time; and that the great bulk of our thoughts proceed in quite a different way, and are occupied by altogether less exalted matters than our vanity has induced us to imagine. The normal mental locomotion of even well-educated men and women (save under the spur of exceptional stimulus) is neither the flight of an eagle in the sky, nor the trot of a horse upon the road, but may better be compared to the lounge of a truant school-boy in a shady lane, now dawdling pensively, now taking a hop-skip-and-jump, now stopping to pick blackberries, and now turning to right or left to catch a butterfly, climb a tree or make dick-duck-and-drake on a pond; going nowhere in particular, and only once in a mile or so proceeding six steps in succession in an orderly and philosophical manner.

It is far beyond my ambition to attempt to supply this large lacune in mental science,

and to set forth the truth of the matter about the actual Thoughts which practically (not theoretically) are wont to pass through human brains. Some few observations on the subject, however, may perhaps be found entertaining, and ought certainly to serve to mitigate our self-exaltation on account of our grand mental endowments, by showing how rarely and under what curious variety of pressure we employ them.

The first, and familiar remark is; that every kind of thought is liable to be coloured and modified in all manner of ways by our physical conditions and surroundings. We are not steam thinking-machines, working evenly at all times at the same rate, and turning out the same sort and quantity of work in the same given period, but rather more like windmills, subject to every breeze, and whirling our sails at one time with great impetus and velocity, and at another standing still, becalmed and ineffective. Sometimes it is our outer conditions which affect us; sometimes it is our own inner wheels which are clogged and refuse to rotate; but, from whatever cause it arises, the modification of our thoughts is often so great as to make us arrive at diametrically opposite conclusions on the same subject and with the same *data* of thought, within an incre-

dibly brief interval of time. Some years ago the President of the British Association frankly answered objections to the consistency of his inaugural address, by referring to the different aspects of the ultimate problems of theology in different 'moods' of mind. When men of such eminence confess to 'moods,' lesser mortals may avow their own mental oscillations without painful humiliation, and even put forward some claim to consistency if the vibrating needle of their convictions do not swing quite round the whole compass, and point at two o'clock to the existence of a Deity and a Life to come, and at six to a nebula for the origin, and a 'streak of morning cloud' for the consummation of things. Possibly also the unscientific mind may claim some praise on the score of modesty if it delay for the moment to instruct mankind in either its two-o'clock or its six-o'clock creed; and wait till it has settled down for some few hours, weeks or months, to any one definite opinion.

Not to dwell for the present on these serious topics, it is only necessary to carry with us through our future investigations, that every man's thoughts are continually fluctuating and vibrating, from inward as well as outward causes. Let us glance for a moment at some of these. First there are the well-known conditions of

health and high animal spirits, in which every thought is rose-coloured; and corresponding conditions of disease and depression, in which everything we think of seems to pass, like a great bruise, through yellow, green, blue and purple to black. A liver complaint causes the universe to be enshrouded in grey; and the gout covers it with any inky pall, and makes us think our best friends little better than fiends in disguise. Further, a whole treatise would be needed to expound how our thoughts are further distempered by food, beverages of various kinds, and narcotics of great variety. When our meals have been too long postponed, it would appear as if that Evil Personage who proverbially finds mischief for idle hands to do, were similarly engaged with an idle digestive apparatus, and the result is, that if there be the smallest and most remote cloud to be seen in the whole horizon of our thoughts, it sweeps up and over us just in proportion as we grow hungrier and fainter, till at last it overwhelms us in depression and despair. 'Why?' we ask ourselves,—'why has not A. written to us for so long? What will B. think of such and such a transaction? How is our pecuniary concern with C. to be settled? What is the meaning of that odd little twitch we have felt so often here or there about

our persons?' The answer of our thoughts, prompted by the evil genius of famine, is always lugubrious in the extreme. 'A. has not written because he is dead. B. will quarrel with us for ever because of that transaction. C. will never pay us our money, or we shall never be able to pay C. That twitch which we have so thoughtlessly disregarded is the premonitory symptom of the most horrible of all human maladies, of which we shall die in agonies and leave a circle of sorrowing friends before the close of the ensuing year.' Such are the *idées noires* which present themselves when we want our dinner; and the best-intentioned people in the world, forsooth! recommend us to summon them round us by fasting, as if they were a company of cherubim instead of imps of quite another character! But the scene undergoes a transformation bordering on the miraculous when we have eaten a slice of mutton and drank half a glass of sherry. If we revert now to our recent meditations, we are quite innocently astonished to think what could possibly have made us so anxious without any reasonable ground? Of course, A. has not written to us, because he always goes grouse-shooting at this season. B. will never take the trouble to think about our little transaction. C. is certain to

pay us, or we can readily raise money to pay him; and our twitch means nothing worse than a touch of rheumatics or an ill-fitting garment.

Beyond the alternations of fasting and feasting, still more amazing are the results of narcotics, alcoholic beverages, and of tea and coffee. Every species of wine exercises a perceptibly different influence of its own, from the cheery and social 'sparkling grape of Eastern France' to the solemn black wine of Oporto, the fit accompaniment of the blandly dogmatic post-prandial prose of elderly gentlemen of orthodox sentiments. A cup of strong coffee clears the brain and makes the thoughts transparent, while one of green tea drives them fluttering like dead leaves before the wind. Time and learning would fail to describe the yet more marvellous effects of opium, hemlock, henbane, haschish, bromide, and chloral. Every one of these narcotics produces a different hue of the mental window through which we look out on the world; sometimes distorting all objects in the wildest manner (like opium), sometimes (like chloral) acting only perceptibly by removing the sense of disquiet and restoring our thoughts to the white light of common-sense cheerfulness; and again acting quite differently on the

thoughts of different persons, and of the same persons at different times.

Only secondary to the effects of inwardly imbibed stimulants or narcotics are those of the outward atmosphere, which in bracing weather makes our thoughts crisp like the frosted grass, and in heavy November causes them to drip chill and slow and dull, like the moisture from the mossy eaves of the Moated Grange. Burning, glaring Southern sunshine dazes our minds as much as our eyes; and a London fog obfuscates them, so that a man might honestly plead that he could no more argue clearly in the fog than the Irishman could spell correctly with a bad pen and muddy ink.

Nor are mouths, eyes and lungs by any means the only organs through which influences arrive at our brain, modifying the thoughts which proceed from them. The sense of Smelling, when gratified by the odours of woods, and gardens and hay-fields, or even of delicately-perfumed rooms, lifts all our thoughts into a region wherein the Beautiful, the Tender and the Sublime may impress us freely; while the same sense, offended by disgusting and noxious odours, as of coarse cookery, open sewers, or close chambers inhabited by vulgar people, thrusts us down into an opposite stratum of

feeling, wherein poetry entereth not, and our very thoughts smell of garlic. Needless to add, that in a still more transcendent way Music seizes on the thoughts of the musically-minded, and bears them off in its talons over sea and land, and up to Olympos like Ganymede. Two easily distinguishable mental influences seem to belong to music according as it is heard by those who really appreciate it, or by others who are unable to do so. To the former it opens a book of poetry, which they follow word for word after the performer as if he read it to them; thinking the thoughts of the composer in succession with scarcely greater uncertainty or vagueness than if they were expressed in verbal language of a slightly mystical description. To the latter the book is closed; but though the listener's own thoughts unroll themselves uninterrupted by the composer's ideas, they are very considerably coloured thereby. 'I delight in music,' said once Sir Charles Lyell to me; 'I am always able to think out my work better while it is going on!' As a matter of fact, he resumed at the moment a disquisition concerning the date of the Glacial Period at the precise point at which it had been interrupted by the performance of a symphony of Beethoven, having evidently mastered in the

interval an intricate astronomical knot. To ordinary mortals with similar deficiency of musical sense, harmonious sound seems to spread a halo like that of light, causing every subject of contemplation to seem glorified, as a landscape appears in a dewy sunrise. Memories rise to the mind and seem infinitely more affecting than at other times; affections still living grow doubly tender; new beauties appear in the picture or the landscape before our eyes, and passages of remembered prose or poetry float through our brains in majestic cadence. In a word, the sense of the Beautiful, the Tender, the Sublime, is vividly aroused, and the atmosphere of familiarity and commonplace, wherewith the real beauty and sweetness of life are too often veiled, is lifted for the hour. As in a camera-oscura, or mirror, the very trees and grass which we had looked on a thousand times are seen to possess unexpected loveliness. But all this can only happen to the non-musical soul when the harmony to which it listens is really harmonious, and when it comes at an appropriate time, when the surrounding conditions permit and incline the man to surrender himself to its influences; in a word, when there is nothing else demanding his attention. The most barbarous of the practices of royalty and

civic magnificence is that of employing music as an accompaniment to feasts. It involves a confusion of the realm of the real and ideal, and of one sense with another, as childish as that of the little girl who took out a peach to eat while bathing in the sea. Next to music during the dinner-time comes music in the midst of a cheerful evening party, where, when every intellect present is strung up to the note of animated conversation and brilliant repartee, there is a sudden *douche* of solemn chords from the region of the pianoforte, and presently some well-meaning gentleman endeavours to lift up all the lazy people, who are lounging in easy-chairs after a good dinner, into the empyrean of emotion 'sublime upon the seraph wings of ecstasy' of Beethoven or Mozart; or some meek damsel, with plaintive note, calls on them, in Schubert's *Addio*, to break their hearts at the memory or anticipation of those mortal sorrows which are either behind or before every one of us, and which it is either agony or profanation to think of at such a moment. All this is assuredly intensely barbarous. The same people who like to mix up the ideal pleasure of music with incongruous enjoyments of another kind would be guilty of giving a kiss with their mouths full of bread and cheese. As to what we may term

extra-mural music, the hideous noises made by the aid of vile machinery in the street, it is hard to find words of condemnation strong enough for it. Probably the organ-grinders of London have done more in the last twenty years to detract from the quality and quantity of the highest kind of mental work done by the nation than any two or three colleges of Oxford or Cambridge have effected to increase it. One mathematician alone (as he informed the writer) estimated the cost of the increased mental labour they have imposed upon him and his clerks at several thousand pounds' worth of first-class work, for which the State practically paid in the added length of time needed for his calculations. Not much better are those church bells which now sound a trumpet before the good people who attend 'matins' and other daily services at hours when their profane neighbours are wearily sleeping, or anxiously labouring at their appointed tasks.

Next to our bodily Sensations come in order of influence on our thoughts the Places in which we happen to do our thinking. Meditating like the pious Harvey 'Among the Tombs' is one thing; doing the same on a breezy mountain side among the gorse and the heather,

quite another. Jostling our way in a crowded street, or roaming in a solitary wood; rattling in an English express train, or floating by moonlight in a Venetian gondola or an Egyptian dahabieh, though each and all favourable conditions for thinking, create altogether distinct classes of lucubrations. If we endeavour to define what are the surroundings amongst which Thought is best sustained and most vigorous, we shall probably find good reason to reverse not a few of our accepted and familiar judgments. The common idea, for example, that we ponder very profoundly by the sea-shore is, I am persuaded, a baseless delusion. We *think* indeed that we are thinking, but for the most part our minds merely lie open, like so many oysters, to the incoming waves, and with scarcely greater intellectual activity. The very charm of the great Deep seems to lie in the fact that it reduces us to a state of mental emptiness and vacuity, while our vanity is soothed by the notion that we are thinking with unwonted emphasis and perseverance. Amphitrite, the enchantress, mesmerizes us with the monotonous passes of her billowy hands, and lulls us into a slumberous hypnotism wherein we meekly do her bidding, and fix our eyes and thoughts, like

biologized men, on the rising and falling of every wave. If it be tempestuous weather we watch open-mouthed till the beautiful white crests topple over and dash in storm and thunder up the beach; and if it be a summer-evening's calm, we note with placid, never-ending contentment how the wavelets, like little children run up softly and swiftly on the golden strand to deposit their gifts of shells and seaweed, and then retreat, shy and ashamed of their boldness, to hide themselves once again under the flowing skirts of Mother Ocean.

Again, divines and poets have united to bolster up our convictions that we do a great deal of important thinking at night when we lie awake in bed. Every preacher points to the hours of the 'silent midnight,' when his warnings will surely come home, and sit like incubi on the breast of sinners who, too often perhaps, have dozed in the day time as they flew, bat-wise, over their heads from the pulpit. Shelley, in *Queen Mab*, affords us a terrible night scene of a king who, after his dinner of 'silence, grandeur, and excess,' finds sleep abdicate his pillow (probably in favour of indigestion); and Tennyson, in *Locksley Hall*, threatens torments of memory still keener to the 'shallow-hearted

cousin Amy' whenever she may happen to lie meditating—

In the dead, unhappy night, when the rain is on the roof.

Certainly if there be any time in the twenty-four hours when we might carry on consecutive chains of thought, it would be when we lie still for hours undisturbed by sight or sound, having nothing to do, and with our bodies so far comfortable and quiescent as to give the minimum of interruption to our mental proceedings. Far be it from me to deny that under such favourable auspices some people may think to good purpose. But if I do not greatly err, they form the exception rather than the rule among bad sleepers. As the Psalmist of old remarked, it is generally 'mischief' which a man—wicked or otherwise—'devises upon his bed;' and the truth of the observation in our day is proved from the harsh Ukases for domestic government which are commonly promulgated by Paterfamilias at the breakfast table, and by the sullenness *de parti pris* which testifies that the sleepless brother, sister, or maiden aunt has made up his or her mind during the night to 'have it out' with So-and-so next morning. People are a little faint and feverish when they lie awake, and nothing occurs to divert their minds and restore them to

equanimity, and so they go on chewing the bitter cud of any little grudge. Thus it comes to pass that while Anger causes Sleeplessness, Sleeplessness is a frequent nurse of Anger.*

Finally, among popular delusions concerning propitious conditions of Thoughts, must be reckoned the belief (which has driven hermits and philosophers crazy) that thinking is better done in abnormal isolation than in the natural social state of man. Of course there is benefit quite incalculable in the reservation of some portion of our days for solitude. How much excuse is to be made for the short-comings, the ill-tempers, the irreligion of those poor people who are scarcely alone for half an hour between the cradle and the grave, God alone can tell. But with such reasonable reservation of our hours and the occasional precious enjoyment of lonely country walks or rides, the benefits of solitude, even on Zimmermann's showing, come nearly to an end, and there is little doubt that instead of thinking more the more hours of loneliness we devote to doing it, the *less* we shall

* A Chief of the Police Force has informed me that arrests of desperadoes are always made, if practicable, at about four a.m.; that hour being found by experience to be the one when animal courage is at its lowest ebb and resistance to be least apprehended.

really think at all; or even retain capacity for thinking and not degenerate into cabbages. Our minds need the stimulus of other minds, as our lungs need oxygen to perform their functions. After all, if we analyse the exquisite pleasure afforded us by brilliant and suggestive conversation, one of its largest elements will be found to be that it has quickened our thoughts from a heavy amble into a gallop. A really fine talk between half-a-dozen well-matched and thoroughly cultivated people, who discuss an interesting subject with their manifold wealth of allusions, arguments, and illustrations, is a sort of mental Oaks or Derby-day, wherein our brains are excited to their utmost speed, and we get over more ground than in weeks of solitary mooning meditation. It is superfluous to add that if our constitutional mental tendency be that of the gentleman who naïvely expressed his feelings by saying impressively to a friend, 'I take *great* interest in my own concerns, I *assure* you I do,' it seems doubly desirable that we should overstep our petty ring-fence of personal hopes, fears, and emotions of all kinds, and roam with our neighbours over their dominions, and into further outlying regions of public and universal interest. Of all ingenious prescriptions for making a miserable moral hypochondriac, it is difficult to

imagine a better than the orthodox plan of the 'Selig-gemachende Kirche' for making a Saint. Take your man, or woman, with a morbidly tender conscience and a pernicious habit of self-introspection. If he or she have an agonizing memory of wrong, sin or sorrow overshadowing the whole of life, so much the better. Then shut the individual up in a cell like a toad in a stone, to feed on his or her own thoughts, till death or madness puts an end to the experiment.

But if the sea-side and solitude, and the mid-night couch have been much overrated as propitious conditions of thought, there are, *per contra*, certain other conditions of it the value of which has been too much ignored. The law of the matter seems to be that real hard Thought, like Happiness, rarely comes when we have made elaborate preparation for it; and that the higher part of the mind which is to be exercised works much more freely when a certain lower part (concerned with 'unconscious cerebration') is busy about some little affairs of its own department and its restless activity is thus disposed of. Not one man in fifty does his best thinking quite motionless, but instinctively employs his limbs in some way when his brain is in full swing of argument and reflexion. Even

a trifling fidget of the hands with a paper-knife, a flower, a piece of twine, or the bread we crumble beside our plate at dinner, supplies in a degree this *desideratum*, and the majority of people never carry on an animated conversation involving rapid thought without indulging in some such habit. But the more complete employment of our unconscious cerebration in walking up or down a level terrace or quarter-deck, where there are no passing objects to distract our attention and no need to mark where we plant our feet, seems to provide even better for smooth-flowing thought. The perfection of such conditions is attained when the walk in question is taken of a still, soft November evening, when the light has faded so far as to blur the surrounding withered trees and flowers, but the gentle gray sky yet affords enough vision to prevent embarrassment. There are a few such hours in every year which appear absolutely invaluable for calm reflexion, and which are grievously wasted by those who hurry in-doors at dusk to light candles and sit round a yet unneeded fire.

There is also another specially favourable opportunity for abstruse meditation, which I trust I may be pardoned for venturing to name. It is the grand occasion afforded by the laudable custom of patiently listening to dull speakers

or readers in the lecture-room or the pulpit. A moment's reflexion will surely enable the reader to corroborate the remark that we seldom think out the subject of a new book or article, or elaborate a political or philanthropic scheme, a family compact, or the *menu* of a large dinner, with so much precision and lucidity as when gazing with vacant respectfulness at a gentleman expatiating with elaborate stupidity on theology or science. The voice of the charmer as it rises and falls is almost as soothing as the sound of the waves on the shore but not quite equally absorbing to the attention; while the repose of all around gently inclines the languid mind to alight like a butterfly on any little flower it may find in the arid waste, and suck it to the bottom. This beneficent result of sermon and lecture-hearing is, however, sometimes deplorably marred by the stuffiness of the room, the hardness and shallowness of the seats (as in that place of severe mortification of the flesh, the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street), and lastly by the unpardonable habit of many orators of lifting their voices in an animated way, as if they really had something to say, and then solemnly announcing a platitude—a process which acts on the nerves of a listener as it must act on those of a flounder to be carried

up into the air half-a-dozen times in the bill of a heron and then dropped flat on the mud. Under trials like these, the tormented thoughts of the sufferer, seeking rest and finding none, are apt to assume quite unaccountable and morbid shapes, and indulge in freaks of an irrational kind, as in a dream. The present writer and some sober-minded acquaintances have, for example, all felt themselves impelled at such hours, to perform aërial flights of fancy about the church or lecture-room in the character of stray robins or bats. 'Here,' they think gravely (quite unconscious for the moment of the absurdity of their reflection)—'here, on this edge of a monument, I might stand and take flight to that cornice an inch wide, whence I might run along to the top of that pillar; and from thence, by merely touching the bald tip of the preacher's head, I might alight on the back of that plump little angel on the tomb opposite, while a final spring would take me through the open pane of window and perch me on the yew-tree outside.' The whole may perhaps be reckoned a spontaneous mythical self-representation of the Psalmist's cry: 'Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest.'

Another kind of meditation under the same

aggravated affliction is afforded by making fantastic pictures out of the stains of damp and tracks of snails on the wall, which often (in village churches especially) supply the young with a permanent subject of contemplation in 'the doctor with his boots,' the 'old lady and her cap,' and the huge face which would be quite perfect if the spectator might only draw an eye where one is missing, as in the fresco of Dante in the Bargello. Occasionally the sunshine kindly comes in and makes a little lively entertainment on his own account by throwing the shadow of the preacher's head ten feet long on the wall behind him, causing the action of his jaws to resemble the vast gape of a crocodile. All these, however, ought perhaps to be counted as things of the past; or, at least, as very 'Rural Recreations of a Country Parishioner,' as A. K. H. B. might describe them. It is not objects to distract and divert the attention which anybody can complain of wanting in the larger number of modern churches in London.

But if our thoughts are wont to wander off into fantastic dreams when we are bored, they have likewise a most unfortunate propensity to swerve into byways of triviality no less misplaced when, on the contrary, we are interested to excess, and our attention has been fixed

beyond the point wherein the tension can be sustained.

Every one has recognised the truth of Dickens' description of Fagin, on his trial, thinking of the pattern of the carpet; and few of us can recall hours of anguish and anxiety without carrying along with their tragic memories certain objects on which the eye fastened with inexplicable tenacity. In lesser cases, and when we have been listening to an intensely interesting political speech, or to a profoundly thoughtful sermon (for even *Habitans in Sicco* may sometimes meet such cases), the mind seems to 'shy' suddenly, like a restive horse, from the whole topic under consideration, and we find ourselves, intellectually speaking, landed in a ditch.

Another singular phenomenon under such circumstances is, that on returning, perhaps after the interval of years, to a spot wherein such excessive mental tension has been experienced, some of us are suddenly vividly impressed with the idea that we have been sitting there during all the intervening time, gazing fixedly on the same pillars and cornices, the same trees projected against the evening sky, or whatever other objects happen to be before our eyes. It would appear that the

impression of such objects made on the retina, while the mind was wholly and vehemently absorbed in other things, must be somehow photographed on the brain in a different way from the ordinary pictures to which we have given their fair share of notice as they passed before us, and that we are dimly aware they have been taken so long. The sight of them once again bringing out this abnormal consciousness is intensely painful, as if the real self had been chained for years to the spot, and only a phantom 'I' had ever gone away and lived a natural human existence elsewhere.

Passing, now, from the external conditions of our Thinking, if we attempt to classify the Thoughts themselves, we shall arrive, I fear, at the painful discovery that the majority of us think most about the least things, and least about the greatest; and that, in short, the mass of our lucubrations is in the inverse ratio of their value. For example, a share of our thoughts, quite astonishing in quantity, is occupied by petty and trivial Arrangements. Rich or poor, it is an immense amount of thought which all (save the most care-engrossed statesmen or absorbed philosophers) give to these wretched little concerns. The wealthy gentleman thinks of how, and where, and when he

will send his servants and horses here and there; of what company he shall entertain; of the clearing of his woods; the preservation of his game; and twenty matters of similar import; while his wife is pondering equally profoundly on the furniture and ornaments of her rooms, the patterns of her flower-beds or her worsted-work, the *menu* of her dinner, and the frocks of her little girls. Poor people need to think much more anxiously of the perpetual problem, 'How to make both ends meet,' by pinching in this direction and earning something in that, and by all the thousand shifts and devices by which life can be carried on at the smallest possible expenditure. One of the very worst evils of limited means consists in the amount of thinking about sordid little economies which becomes imperative when every meal, every toilet, and every attempt at locomotion is a battle-field of ingenuity and self-denial against ever-impending debt and difficulty. Among men, the evil is most commonly combated by energetic efforts to *earn* rather than to *save;* but among women, to whom so few fields of honest industry are open, the necessity for a perpetual guard against the smallest freedom of expense falls with all its cruel and soul-crushing weight, and on the faces of thousands of them may be read the sad story of youthful enthusiasm

all nipped by pitiful cares, anxieties, and meannesses; perhaps the most foreign of all sentiments to their naturally liberal and generous hearts.

Next to actual arrangements which have some practical use, however small, an inordinate quantity of thought is wasted by most of us on wholly unreal plans and hypotheses which the thinker never even supposes to bear any relation with the living world. Such are the endless moony speculations, '*if* such a thing had not happened' which did happen, or, '*if* So-and-so had gone hither' instead of thither, or, '*if* I had only said or done' what I did not say or do, 'there would have followed'—heaven knows what. Sometimes we pursue such endless and aimless guessings with a companion, and then we generally stop short pretty soon with the vivid sense of the absurdity of our behaviour; unless in such a case as that of the celebrated old childless couple who, looking back over their fireside on forty years of unbroken union, proceeded to speculate on what they should have done *if* they had had children, and finally quarrelled and separated for ever on a divergence of opinion respecting the best profession for their (imaginary) second son. But when alone, we go on weaving interminable cobwebs out of such gossamer threads of thought, like poor Perrette

with her pot of milk—a tale the ubiquity of which among all branches of the Aryan race sufficiently proves the universality of the practice of building *chateaux en Espagne*.

Of course, with every one who has a profession or business of any kind, a vast quantity of thought is expended necessarily upon its details, insomuch that to prevent themselves, when in company, from 'talking shop' is somewhat difficult. The tradesman, medical man, lawyer, soldier, landholder, have each plenty to think of in his own way; and in the case of any originality of work—such as belongs to the higher class of literature and art—the necessity for arduous and sustained thought in composition is so great that (on the testimony of a great many wives) I have come to the conclusion that a fine statue, picture, or book is rarely planned without at least a week of domestic irritation and discomfort, and the summary infliction of little deserved chastisement on the junior branches of the distinguished author or artist's family.

Mechanical contrivances obviously give immense occupation to those singular persons who can love Machines, and do not regard them (as I must confess is my case) with mingled mistrust, suspicion and abhorrence as small models

of the Universe on the Atheistic Projection. Again for the discovery of any chemical *desideratum*, ceaseless industry and years of thought are expended; and a Palissy deems a quarter of a life-time properly given to pondering upon the best glaze for crockery. Only by such sacrifices, indeed, have both the fine and the industrial arts attained success; and happy must the man be counted whose millions of thoughts expended on such topics have at the end attained any practical conclusion to be added to the store of human knowledge. Not so (albeit the thoughts are much after the same working character) are the endless meditations of the idle on things wholly personal and ephemeral; such as the inordinate care about the details of furniture and equipage now prevalent among the rich in England; and the lavish waste of feminine minds on double acrostics, art, embroidery, and above all,—Dress! A young lady once informed me that after having for some hours retired to repose, her sister, who slept in the same room, had disturbed her in the middle of the night: 'Eugénie, waken up! I have thought of a trimming for our new gowns!' Till larger and nobler interests are opened to women, I fear there must be a good many whose 'dream by night and thought by day' is of trimmings.

When we have deducted all these silly and trivial and useless thoughts from the sum of human thinking — and evil and malicious thoughts, still worse by far—what small residuum of room is there, alas, for anything like real serious reflection! How seldom do the larger topics presented by history, science, or philosophy engage us! How yet more rarely do we face the great questions of the whence, the why, and the whither, of all this hurrying life of ours, pouring out its tiny sands so rapidly! To some, indeed, a noble philanthropic purpose or profound religious faith gives not only consistency and meaning to life, but supplies a background to all thoughts—an object high above them to which the mental eye turns at every moment. But this is, alas! the exception far more than the rule; and, where there is no absorbing human affection, it is on trifles light as air and interests transitory as a passing cloud, that are usually fixed those minds whose boast it is that their thoughts 'travel through eternity.'

Alone among Thoughts of joy or sorrow, hope or fear, stands the grim, soul-chilling thought of Death. It is a strange fact that, face it and attempt to familiarize ourselves with it as we may, this one thought ever presents itself as

something fresh, something we had never really thought before—'*I shall die!*' There is a shock in the simple words ever repeated each time we speak them in the depths of our souls.

There are few instances of the great change which has passed over the spirit of the modern world more striking than the revolution which has taken place in our judgment respecting the moral expediency of perpetually thinking about Death. Was it that the whole Classic world was so intensely entrancing and delightful, that to wean themselves from its fascinations and reduce their minds to composure, the Saints found it beneficial to live continually with a skull at their side? For something like sixteen centuries Christian teachers seem all to have taken it for granted that merely to write up 'Memento mori,' was to give to mankind the most salutary and edifying counsel. Has anybody faith in the same nostrum now, and is there a single St. Francis or St. Theresa who keeps his, or her, pet skull alongside of his Bible and Prayer-book?

A parallel might also be drawn between the medical and spiritual treatment in vogue in former times and in our own. Up to our generation, when a man was ill the first idea of

the physician was to bleed him and reduce him in every way by 'dephlogistic' treatment, after which it was supposed the disease was 'drawn off,' and if the patient expired the survivors were consoled by the reflection that Dr. Sangrado had done all which science and skill could effect to preserve so valuable a life. In the memory of some now living, the presence of a medical man with a lancet in his pocket (instantly used on the emergency of a fall from horseback or a fit of apoplexy, epilepsy, or intoxication), was felt by alarmed relations to be quite providential. Only somewhere about the period of the first visitation of cholera in 1832 this phlebotomising dropped out of fashion, and when the doctors had pretty nearly abandoned it, a theory was broached that it was the human constitution, not medical science, which had undergone a change, and that men and women were so much weaker than heretofore that, even in fever, they now needed to be supported by stimulants. Very much in the same way it would appear that in former days our spiritual advisers imagined they could cure moral disease by reducing the vital action of all the faculties and passions, and bringing a man to feel himself a 'dying creature' by way of training him to live. Now-a-days our divines

endeavour to fill us with warmer feelings and more vigorous will, and tell us that—

> 'Tis life of which our veins are scant ;
> O Life, not Death, for which we pant ;
> More life and fuller, *that* we want.

Is it possible that human nature is really a little less vigorous and passionate than it was when Antony and Cleopatra lived on the earth ; or when the genius of Shakspeare made them live on the stage ?

ESSAY

V.

TO KNOW, OR NOT TO KNOW?

TO KNOW, OR NOT TO KNOW?

THE father of Grecian philosophy held that 'Man was created to know and to contemplate.' The father of Hebrew philosophy — whose 'Song,' if not his 'Wisdom,' is canonical, and whose judgment, if not his life, is supposed to have been divinely guided—taught the somewhat different lesson: 'He that increaseth Knowledge increaseth sorrow.'

We have been more or less steadily trying the validity of Solomon's dictum for about three thousand years. Would it be premature to take stock of the results, and weigh whether it be really for human well-being or the reverse that Knowledge is 'increasing,' not only at the inevitable rate of the accumulating experience of generations but also at the highly accelerated pace attained by our educational machinery? It is at least slightly paradoxical that the same State should call on its clergy to teach as an infallible truth, that 'he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow,' and at the same time decree for all its subjects, as if it were a highly

benevolent measure, universal compulsory education.

I fear that the prejudice in favour of Knowledge is so potent that no reader will give me credit for entering on this inquiry in any other spirit than one of banter. Nevertheless I propose in the present paper, to examine to the best of my ability, the general bearings of book-knowledge upon human happiness and virtue, and so attain to some conclusion on the matter, and decide whether Solomon did or did not give proof of profound sagacity in originating the axiom that 'Ignorance is bliss' in the usual negative form of Hebrew verities; and also in foretelling (nearly thirty centuries before the present London publishing season) that 'of the making of books there is no end.' Knowledge, like other evils, it seems, is infinitely reproductive.

The larger and simpler objections to book-lore lie on the surface of the case. First. Health, bodily activity and muscular strength are almost inevitably exchanged in a certain measure for learning. Ardent students are rarely vigorous or agile; and, in the humbler ranks, the loss of ruddy cheeks and stalwart limbs among the children of the peasantry, after schools have been established in a village,

has been constantly observed. The close and heated class-rooms in which the poor urchins sit (often in winter with clothes and shoes drenched through with rain or snow) form a bad exchange, in a physical point of view, for the scamper across the common, and the herding of sheep on the mountain. Let us put the case at its lowest. Suppose that, out of three persons who receive an ordinary book-education, one always loses a certain share of health; that he is never so vigorous as he would have been, and is more liable to consumption, dyspepsia and other woes incident to sedentary humanity, of which again he bequeaths a tendency to his offspring. Here is surely some deduction from the supposed sum of happiness derivable from knowledge? Can all the flowers of rhetoric of all the poets make atonement for the loss of the bounding pulse, the light free step, the cool brain of perfect health?

Secondly. It is not only the health of life's noon and evening which is more or less compromised by study but the morning hours of life's glorious prime, hours such as never can come again on this side heaven, which are given to dull, dog's-eared books and dreary 'copies,' and sordid slates; instead of to cowslips and buttercups, the romp in the hay-field, and

the flying of the white kite, which soars up into the deep, dark, blue and carries the young eyes after it where the unseen lark is singing and the child-angels are playing among the rolling clouds of summer. There was once a child called from such dreams to her lesson—the dreary lesson of learning to spell possibly those very words which her pen is now tracing on this page. The little girl looked at her peacock, sitting in his glory on the balustrade of the old granite steps, with nothing earthly ever to do but to sun himself and eat nice brown bread and call 'Pea-ho!' every morning; and the poor child burst into a storm of weeping, and sobbed 'I wish I were a peacock! I wish I were a peacock!' Truly Learning ought to have something to show to compensate for the thousand tears shed in similar anguish! School-rooms are usually the ugliest, dullest, most airless and sunless rooms in the houses where they exist; and yet in these dens we ruthlessly imprison children day after day, year after year, till childhood itself is over, never, never to return. And *then* the young man or woman may go forth freely among the fields and woods, and find them fair and sweet; but never so fair or so sweet as they were in the wasted years of infancy. Who can lay his hand on his heart,

and say that a cowslip or a daffodil smells now as it used to smell when it was so very much easier to pluck it, quite on our own level? Do strawberries taste as they did, and is there the same drop of honey in each of the flowerets of the red clover? Are modern kittens and puppies half so soft and so funny as they were in former days when we were young? No one will dare affirm any of these things who has reached years of discretion. Is it not then a most short-sighted policy,—giving away of a bird in hand for a bird in the bush—to sacrifice the joyous hours of young existence for the value of advantages (if advantages indeed they be) to be reaped in later and duller years? Watch a child at play, oh reader, if you have forgotten your own feelings. Let it be Coleridge's

> Little singing, dancing elf,
> Singing, dancing by itself.

Catch, if your dim orbs are sharp enough, those cloudless blue eyes looking straight into yours, and hear the laugh which only means the best of all possible jokes, 'I *am* so happy!' Then go to your stupid desk, and calculate algebraically what amount of classics and mathematics are equivalent to that ecstasy of young existence, wherein

> Simply to feel that we breathe, that we live,
> Is worth the best joy which life elsewhere can give.

The pagan Irish believed in a paradise for the virtuous dead, and called it 'Innis-na-n'Oge,' the 'Island of the Young.' We all live there the first dozen years of mortality; and unless we prove unusually excellent, I fear it may be long before we arrive at a better place.

But hitherto we have taken for granted, that the little prisoners of the school-room are all sure to live and come into their fortunes of erudition, earned with so many tear-blisters on their lesson-books. Of course, however, this is far from being the true state of the case. The poor little child, whose happiness—innocent, certain, and immediate happiness—is bartered so ruthlessly for the remote and contingent benefit of his later years, may very probably never see those years at all; nay, in a fixed average number of cases, it is absolutely certain that he will not grow into a man. Can anything be much more sad than such an abortive sacrifice? Who does not remember Walter Scott's 'Pet Marjory,' with her infantine delight in her visits to the country and the calves and the geese, and the 'bubbly-jocks'; and how she wrote down in her private journal that she was learning the multiplication table, and that seven times seven was a 'divlish thing,' and quite impossible to acquire; and how, when some-

how, at last even the still more dreadful 'eight times eight' had been lodged in her poor little brains, there came a day when she cried suddenly to her mother, 'Oh, my head! my head!' and then in a few brief hours there was an end of lessons and their advantages for Marjory for ever?

And yet again, when some ardent lad has passed through school and college, foregoing all the sports of his age, and receiving prizes and honours, till he stands a first-class man of Oxford or Cambridge, and his father's sacrifices and his mother's yearnings, and all his own gallant and self-denying labours seem on the point of reaping their reward, how often does it come to pass that with the close of the struggle comes the reaction, the decline, the hasty journey abroad, the hoping against hope, and then—death?

Thirdly. There is the waste of Eyesight in education. It is understood, when we see a young man with the 'light of the body' dimmed behind glass spectacles, that he has hurt his eyes by poring over books. A farmer, a sportsman, or a soldier, purblind at twenty-five or thirty, is a rare thing to see. It is the scholar, lawyer, or divine who has paid the penalty of seeing God's beautiful world evermore through

those abominable bits of glass. And for what mighty advantage? Again I say, it ought to be something excessively valuable for which a man will exchange the apple of his eye. Suppose Bell Taylor were to ask a blind gentleman a fee of a thousand pounds to give him his sight as he has given it to more than one born blind? The blind man, if he possessed the money, would doubtless pour it out like water to obtain the priceless boon of vision. And *this* is the gift which our boys exchange for a moderate acquaintance with the Greek language, to be forgotten in a few years after they leave school!

Half the vast Teutonic nation beholds the universe from behind spectacles; owing, no doubt, to their vaunted compulsory education, aided by their truculent black types. And we, open-eyed Britons, are exhorted, forsooth, to admire and follow in the steps of those barnacled Prussians!

Such are three of the most obvious losses to be placed in the scale against the gains of Knowledge—the loss to many of bodily health; to all of the unshackled freedom of childhood; and to not a few of perfect eyesight.

But we cannot suppose it was to any of these things Solomon alluded when he linked

Knowledge and Sorrow in one category. It is not likely that those studies of his, about the hyssop and the cedar, injured his health; nor that the royal sage sate on his famous ivory throne to receive the Queen of Sheba in a pair of spectacles. As to the loss of the pleasures of childhood, his well-known opinion of the value of the Rod (to the wisdom of which the subsequent conduct of his son Rehoboam afforded an illustration) makes it probable that he would have approved of the torture of infants through the instrumentality of lessons. Knowledge and Sorrow had, no doubt some, other connection in his mind; and that connection we have still to mark.

It is a paradox only too readily verified that the mind as well as the body suffers in more ways than one from the acquirement of book knowledge. In the first place, the Memory, laden with an enormous mass of facts, and accustomed to shift the burden of carrying them to written notes and similar devices, loses much of its natural tenacity. The ignorant clodhopper always remembers the parish chronicles better than the scholarly parson. The old family servant, who is strongly suspected of not knowing how to write and whose spectacles are never forthcoming when there is any necessity

to read, is the living annalist of the house and was never yet known to forget an order, except now and then on purpose. Not only are the interests, and consequently the attention and retentive powers of illiterate persons monopolised by the practical concerns of life and the tales of the past which may have reached their ears, but they have actually clearer heads, less encumbered by a multitude of irrelevant ideas, and can recall whatever they need, at a moment's notice, without tumbling over a whole lumber-room full of rubbish to get at it. The old Rabbinical system of schooling, which mainly consisted in the committal to memory of innumerable aphorisms and *dicta* of sages and prophets, possessed this enormous advantage over modern instruction—that whatever a man had so learned, he possessed at his finger's ends, ready for instant use in every argument. But, as half the value of knowledge in practical life depends on the rapidity with which it can be brought to bear at a given moment on the point at issue, and as a ready-witted man will not merely outshine in discussion his slow-brained antagonist but forestall and outrun him in every way, save in the labours of the library, it follows, that to sacrifice the ready-money of the mind for

paper hard to negotiate, is extremely bad economy. Mere book-learning, instead of rendering the memory more strong and agile, accustoms it to hobble on crutches.

Other mental powers suffer even more than the memory by the introduction of books. That method which we familiarly call the 'Rule of Thumb,'—that is, the method of the Artist,—is soon lost when there come to be treatises and tables of calculation to form, instead, the Method of the Mechanic. The boats of Greece are to this day *sculptured* rather than wrought by the shipwrights, even as the old architects cut their marble architraves by the eye of genius trained to beauty and symmetry, not by the foot-rule of precedent and book-lore. The wondrous richness and harmony of colouring of Chinese and Indian and Turkish stuffs and carpets and porcelain, are similarly the result, not of any rules to be reduced to formulæ, but of taste unfettered by pattern-books, unwarped by Schools of Art-Manufacture, bequeathed through long generations, each acquainted intimately with the aforesaid 'rule of thumb.'

For the Reasoning powers, the noblest in the scale of human faculties, it may be fairly doubted whether the modern increase of Knowledge has done much to strengthen them, when we find

ourselves still unprotected by common sense against such absurdities as those which find currency amongst us. Men are treated amongst us like fowls, crammed to the crop with facts, facts, facts, till their digestion of them is impaired.

As to the Imagination, books are like the stepping-stones whereon fancy trips across an otherwise impassable river to gather flowers on the further bank. But it may be questioned whether the reading eye ever really does the same work as the hearing ear. The voice of tradition bears, as no book can do, the burden of the feelings of generations. A ballad learned orally from our mother's lips seems to have far other meaning when we recall it, perchance long years after that sweet voice has been silent, than the stanzas we perused yesterday through our spectacles in a volume freshly reviewed in the *Times*.

Such are the somewhat dubious results of book-lore on the faculties exercised in its acquisition. It is almost needless to remark that there are also certain positive vices frequently engendered by the same pursuit. Bacon's noble apophthegm, that 'a little knowledge leads to atheism, but a great deal brings us back to God,' needs for commentary that 'a little' must be

taken to signify what many people think 'much.' Read in such a sense, it applies not only to religious faith but to faith in everything, and most particularly to faith in Knowledge itself. Nobody despises books so much as those who have read many of them; except those still more hopeless infidels who have written them. Watch the very treatment given to his library by a book-worm. Note how the volumes are knocked about, and left on chairs, and scribbled over with ill-penned notes, and ruthlessly dog's-eared and turned down on their faces on inky tables, and sat upon in damp grass under a tree! Contrast this behaviour towards them with the respectful demeanour of unlettered mortals who range the precious and well-dusted tomes like soldiers on drill on their spruce shelves; nobody pushed back out of the line, nobody tumbling sideways against his neighbour, nobody standing on his head! History is not jumbled ignominiously with romance; moral treatises are not made sandwiches of (as we have beheld) between the yellow covers of Zola; and 'Sunday books' have a prominent pew all to themselves, where they are not rubbed against by either profane wit or worldly wisdom. Such is the different appreciation of literature by those to whom it is very familiar and by

those to whom it preserves still a little of the proverbial magnificence of all unknown things.

We used to hear, some years ago, so much about the Pride of Learning that it would be a commonplace to allude to that fault among the contingent disadvantages of study. One of the Fathers describes how he was flogged by an angel for his predilection for Cicero—an anecdote which must have made many a schoolboy, innocent of any such error, feel that life was only a dilemma between the rods of terrestrial and celestial pedagogues. But it is obvious that the saint had in his mind a sense that the reading of *Tusculan Disputations* had set him up—saint though he was—above the proper spirit of implicit docility and unqualified admiration for more sacred instructions. The critical spirit, which is the inevitable accompaniment of high erudition, is obviously a good way off from that ovine frame of mind which divines, in all ages, have extolled as the proper attitude for their flocks. Nay, in a truer and better sense than that of the open-mouthed credulity so idly inculcated, it must be owned that, short of that really great knowledge of which Bacon spoke and which allies itself with the infinite wisdom of love and faith, there are

few things more hurtful to a man than to be aware that he knows a great deal more than those about him. The main difference between what are called self-made men and those who have been educated in the upper grades, is that the former, from their isolation, have a constant sense of their own knowledge, as if it were a Sunday coat, while the others wear it easily as their natural attire. The best thing which could happen to a village Crichton would be, to be mercilessly snubbed by an Oxford don. The days when women were 'Précieuses' and 'Blue Stockings' were those in which it was a species of miraculous Assumption of Virgins when they were lifted into the heaven of Latin Grammar.

But, passing over the injury to healthy eyesight and mental vigour contingent on learning, and the moral faults sometimes engendered thereby, I proceed to ask another question. What is the ethical value of the Knowledge bought at such a price, and heaped together by mankind during the thirty centuries since Solomon uttered his warning? How has it contributed to their moral welfare?

Surely it is true that even as Art too often gilds sensuality, and renders it attractive to souls otherwise above its influence, so Knowledge must open new roads to temptation,

and take off from sin that strangeness and horror which is one of the best safeguards of the soul? The old jest of the confessor, who asked the penitent whether he did such and such dishonest tricks, and received the reply, 'No, Father, but I will do them next time,' was only a fable of one form of the mischief of knowledge; and that not the most fatal form either. To know how to do wrong is one small step towards doing it. To know that scores and hundreds and thousands of people, in all lands and ages, have done the same wrong, is a far larger encouragement to the timidity of guilt. Not only is it dangerous to know that there is a descent to Avernus, but specially dangerous to know that it is easy and well-trodden. Dr. Watts was injudicious, to say the least of it, to betray to children that the way to perdition is a

Broad road, where thousands go,

which, moreover,

Lies near, and opens fair.

Better let people suppose that it has become quite grass-grown and impassable.

Many offences, such as drunkenness, debauchery, swindling, adulteration, and false weights, are diseases propagated, chiefly if not solely, like small-pox by direct infection

conveyed in the knowledge that A. B. C. and D. do the same things. David was not so far wrong to be angry; and divines need not be so anxious to excuse him for being so, when he saw the 'wicked' flourishing 'like green bay trees.' Such sights are, to the last degree, trying and demoralising.

In a yet larger and sadder sense, the knowledge of the evil of the world, of the baseness, pollution, cruelty, which have stained the earth from the earliest age till this hour, is truly a knowledge fraught with dread and woe. He who can walk over the carnage field of history and behold the agonies of the wounded and the fallen, the mutilations and hideous ruin of what was meant to be such beautiful humanity; he who can see all this, aye, or but a corner of that awful Aceldama, and yet retain his unwavering faith in the final issue of the strife, and his satisfaction that it has been permitted to human free will, must be a man of far other strength than he who judges of the universe from the peaceful prosperity of his parish, and believes that the worst of ills is symbolised by the stones under which 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.' Almost every form of knowledge is some such trial of faith. Look at zoology and palæontology. What revelations of

pain and death in each hideous artifice of jagged tooth, and ravening beak, and cruel claw? What mysterious laws of insect and fungus life developed within higher organisms to whom their presence is torture! What savage scenes of pitiless strife in the whole vast struggle for existence of every beast and bird, every fish and reptile! Turn to ethnology, and gather up the facts of life of all the barbarian tribes of Africa and Polynesia; of the countless myriads of their progenitors; and of those who dwelt in Europe and Asia in bygone æons of prehistoric time. Is not the story of these squalid, half-human, miserable creatures full of woe? Our fathers dreamed of a Paradise and of a primæval couple dwelling there in perfect peace and innocence. We have at last so eaten of the Tree of Knowledge, that we have been driven out of even the ideal Eden; and instead thereof we behold the earliest parents of our race, dwarf and hirsute, shivering and famished, contending with mammoths in a desert world, and stung and goaded by want and pain along every step in the first advance from the bestiality of the baboon into the civilisation of a man.

Turn to astronomy, and we peer, dazed and sick, into the abysses of time and space opened beneath us; bottomless abysses where no

plummet can sound and all our toy-like measures of thousands of ages and millions of miles drop useless from our hands. Can any thought be more tremendous than the question, What are *we* in this immensity? We had fondly fancied we were Creation's last and greatest work, the crown and glory of the universe, and that our world was the central stage for the drama of God. Where are we now? When the 'stars fall from heaven' will they 'fall on the earth even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs?' Nay, rather will one of the heavenly host so much as notice when our little world, charged with all the hopes of man, bursts like a bubble, and falls in the foam of a meteor shower, illumining for a single night some planet calmly rolling on its way?

Let us pass from the outer into the inner realm, and glance at the developments of human thought. The knowledge of Philosophy properly so called, from Pythagoras and Plato to Kant and Spencer—is it a Knowledge the increase of which is wholly without 'sorrow?' Not the most pathetic poem in literature seems to me half so sad as Lewes' *History of Philosophy*. Those endless wanderings amid the labyrinths of Being and Knowing, Substance and Phenomenon, Nominalism and Realism, which, to

most men, seem like a troubled 'dream within a dream,' to him who has taken the pains to understand them rather appear like the wanderings of the wretch lost in the catacombs. He roams hither and thither, and feels feebly along the walls, and stumbles in the dark finding himself in a passage which has no outlet, and turns back to seek another way of escape, and grasps at something he deems may contain a clue to the far distant daylight, and lo! it is but an urn filled with dust and dead men's bones.

Faust is the true type of the student of metaphysics when he marks the skull's 'spectral smile':

> Saith it not that thy brain, like mine,
> Still loved and sought the beautiful,
> Loved truth for its own sake, and sought,
> Regardless of aught else the while,
> Like mine the light of cloudless day,
> And in unsatisfying thought
> By twilight glimmers led astray,
> Like mine, at length, sank over-wrought.

There *may* be truth within our reach. Some of us deem we have found it in youth, and passing out of the metaphysic stage of thought, use our philosophy as a scaffolding wherewith to build the solid edifice of life; gradually heeding less and less how that scaffolding may prove

rotten or ill-jointed. But even in such a case, the knowledge of all that *has* been, and *is* not, in the world of man's highest thought is a sorrowful one. As we wander on from one system to another, we feel as if we were but numbering the gallant ships with keels intended to cut such deep waters, and topmasts made to bear flags so brave, which lie wrecked and broken into drift-wood along the shore of the enchanted Loadstone Isle.

What is, then, the conclusion of our long pleading? Knowledge is acquired at the cost of a certain measure of health, and eyesight, and youthful joy. Knowledge involves the deterioration of some faculties as well as the strengthening of others. Knowledge engenders sundry moral faults. In the realms of history, of physical and of mental science, the survey of things obtained through knowledge is full of sadness and solemnity. The telescope which has revealed to us a thousand galaxies of suns has failed to show us the Heaven which we once believed was close overhead.

Is then the pursuit of Knowledge, after all, truly a delusion, the worst and weariest of human mistakes, a thing to which we are driven by our necessities on one hand and lured by

our thirst for it on the other, but which, nevertheless, like the martyrs' cup of salt water, only burns our lips with its bitter brine?

Not so! a thousand times, no! Knowledge, like Virtue, is not good because it is useful, but useful because it is good. It is useful contingently; and good essentially. The joy of it is simple; and not only needs not to be supplemented by accessory advantages, but is well worth the forfeit of many advantages to obtain. The most miserable wretch we can imagine is the ignorant convict locked up in a solitary cell, with nothing to employ his thoughts but unattainable vice and frustrated crime, whereon his stupid judges leave him to ruminate as if such poison were moral medicine to heal the diseases of his soul. And, on the other hand, one of the happiest beings we can imagine is the man at the opposite end of the intellectual scale, who lives in the free acquirement of noble knowledge. What is any 'increase of sorrow' incurred thereby, compared to the joy of it? To build Memory like a gallery hung round with all the loveliest scenes of nature and all the masterpieces of art; to make the divine chorus of the poets sing for us their choicest strains whenever we beckon them from their cells; to talk familiarly, as if they were our

living friends, with the best and wisest men who have ever lived on earth and link our arms in theirs in the never-withering groves of an eternal Academe,—this is to burst the bounds of space and bring the ages together, and lift ourselves out of the sordid dust to sit at the banquet of heroes and of gods.

ESSAY

VI.

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE.

WHETHER it be best to live rapidly or slowly; whether the 'twenty years of Europe' be preferable to the 'Cycle of Cathay;' and what is to be said on behalf of each of the two modes of existence,—supposing that we have the choice between them,—seem to be questions not unworthy of a little consideration. It is quite possible that the common impulse to be 'in among the throngs of men,' and to cram a month's ideas and sensations into a day, may be the truest guide to happiness; indeed it is rather sorrowful to doubt that it should be so, considering how every successive census shows the growth of the urban over the rural populations, and how strongly the magnets of the great cities seem destined in future years to draw into them all the loose attractable human matter in each country. Nevertheless, it must be admitted to be also possible that, like the taste for tobacco or alcohol or opium, the taste for town life may

be an appetite the indulgence of which is deleterious, and that our gains of enjoyment thereby obtained may be practically outbalanced by the loss of pleasures which slip away meanwhile unperceived. It would be satisfactory, once for all, to feel assured that in choosing either town or county life (when we have the choice), we not only follow immediate inclination, but make deliberate selection of that which must necessarily be the higher and happier kind of life, on which, when the time comes for saying good-night, we shall look back without the miserable regret that we have permitted the nobler duties and the sweeter joys to escape us, while we have spent our years in grasping at shadows and vanities. The dog with the bone in his mouth, who drops it to catch the bone in the water, is a terrible warning to all mankind. But which is the real bone, and which is only the reflection? The question is not easily answered.

Let us premise that it is of English country life and town life alone I mean to speak. Foreigners—Frenchmen, for example—who live in the country, seem always to do so under protest, and to wish to convey to the traveller that, like the patriarch, they are only strangers and sojourners in the rural districts, seeking a better

country, even a Parisian. Moliére's Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, who has been six weeks in the capital once in her life, and who indignantly asks her visitor: '*Me prenez vous pour une provinciale, Madame?*' is the type of them all. Of course, country life taken thus as a temporary and rather disgraceful banishment can never display its true features, or produce its proper quantum of enjoyment.

And again, among English forms of country life, it is life in *bonâ fide* rural districts which we must take for our type. All round London there now exists a sort of intellectual cordon, extending from twenty to thirty miles into Kent and Surrey, and about ten miles into Herts. and Essex. Professor Nichols might have mapped it as he did our starry cluster, by jotting down every house on the boundary inhabited by politicians, literary men, and artists, and then running a line all round from one to another. Within this circumference (of course, extending year by year) the ideas, habits, and conversation of the inhabitants are purely Londonesque. The *habitué* of London dinner-parties finds himself perfectly at home at every table where he sits down, and may take it for granted that his hosts and their guests will all know the same familiar characters, the same anec-

dotes of the season, the books, the operas, the exhibitions; and much more than all this, will possess the indescribable easy London manner of lightly tripping over commonplace subjects, and seriously discussing only really interesting ones, which is the art of conversational perspective. Beyond the invisible mental London Wall which we have described, the wanderer seems suddenly to behold another intellectual realm. As the author of the 'Night Thoughts' describes a rather more startling experience, he stands on the last battlement, which

> Looks o'er the vale of non-existence;

at the end of all things wherewith he is familiar. He has, in short, penetrated into the Rural Districts of the Mind, where men's ideas have hedges and ditches no less than their fields.

And once again we must take English country life in its most elevated and perfect form—that of the hereditary landed gentry—to contrast it most advantageously with the life of towns. To understand and enjoy country life as it may be enjoyed, a man should not only live in one of those 'Stately Homes of England,' of which Mrs. Hemans was so enamoured, but be born and have spent his youth in such a house built by his fathers in long past

generations. A wealthy merchant or a great lawyer who buys in his declining years the country-seat of some fallen family, to enjoy therein the honourable fruits of his labours, may probably be a much more intelligent person than the neighbouring squire, whose acres have descended to him *depuis que le monde est monde*. But he can no more make himself into a country gentleman, and acquire the tastes and ideas of one, or learn to understand *from the inside* the loves and hates, pleasures and prejudices of squiredom, than he can acquire the *dolce favella Toscana* by buying himself a Florentine barony.

And, lastly, our typical country life must neither be that of people so great and wealthy as to be called frequently by political interests up to Parliament, and who possess two or more great estates (a man can no more have two *homes* than he can have two heads), nor yet that of people in embarrassed and narrow circumstances. The genuine squire is never rich in the sense in which great merchants and manufacturers are rich, for, however many acres he may possess, it is tolerably certain that the claims on them will be quite in proportion to their extent. There is, in fact, a *kind of money* which never comes out of land; a certain

freedom in the disposal of large sums quite unknown among the landed gentry, at least in these days. But if not possessed of a heavy balance at their bankers, the country family must have the wherewithal for the young men to shoot and hunt and fish, and for the girls to ride or amuse themselves with garden and pleasure-grounds according to taste. All these things being elements of the typical English country life must be assumed as at least attainable at will by our 'Country Mouse' if he is not to be put altogether out of countenance by his brother of the town.

As for the Town Mouse, he need not be rich, nor is it more than a trifling advantage to him (felt chiefly at the outset of his career), that his father or grandfather should have occupied the same social position as himself. All that is needed is that, in the case of a man, he should belong to a good club, and go out often to dinner; and, in the case of a lady, that she should have from one hundred to five hundred people on her visiting list. Either of these fortunate persons may, without let or hindrance, experience pretty nearly all the intellectual and moral advantages and disadvantages of living in a town provided their place of abode be London. Over every other city in the empire there steals some breath of

country air, if it be small; or, if it be large, its social character is so far modified by special commercial, industrial, or ecclesiastical conditions, that its influence cannot be held to be merely that of a town *pur et simple;* nor are the people who come out of it properly typically towny, but rather commercial-towny, manufacturing-towny, or cathedral-towny, as the case may be.

Turn we now from these preliminaries to the characteristics of the Town life and the Country life, each in its own most perfect English form. Let us see first what is to be said for each, and then strike our balance. Very briefly we may dismiss the commonly recognized external features of both, and pass as rapidly as possible to the more subtle ones, which have scarcely perhaps been noted as carefully as their importance as items in the sum of happiness will warrant.

Town Mouse, *loquitur.*

'I confess I love London. It *is* a confession, of course, for everybody who lives in the country seems to think there is a particular virtue in doing so, resembling the cognate merit of early rising. Even that charming town poet

Mr. Locker practically admits the same when he says:—

> I hope I'm fond of much that's good,
> As well as much that's gay;
> I'd like the country *if I could*,
> I like the Park in May.

'The truth is that one wants *to live*, not to vegetate; to do as much good, either to ourselves or other people as time permits; to receive and give impressions; to feel, to act, to *be* as much as possible in the few brief years of mortal existence; and this concentrated Life can be lived in London as nowhere else. If a man have any ambition, here it may best be pursued. If he desire to contend for any truth or any justice, here is his proper battlefield. If he love pleasure, here are fifty enjoyments at his disposal for one which he can obtain in the country. The mere sense of forming part of this grand and complicated machine whereof four millions of men and women work the wheels, makes my pulse beat faster, and gives me a sense as if I were marching to the sound of trumpets. Then the finish and completeness of London life is delightful to the thoroughly civilized mind. It is only the half-reclaimed savage who is content with unpaved and unlighted roads, ill-trained servants, slovenly equipages,

and badly-cooked, badly-attended dinners. Like my little nibbling prototype who served his feast "*sur un tapis de Turquie*," I like everything, down to the little card on which my *ménu* is written, to be perfect about me. The less I am reminded by disagreeable sensations of my animal part, the more room is left for the exercise of my higher intellectual functions. The ascetic who lives on locusts and wild honey, and *catches the locusts*, has far less leisure to think about better things than the alderman who sits down every day to ten courses, served by a well-trained staff of London servants. The sense of order, of ease, of dignity and courtesy, is continually fostered and flattered in the great Imperial City, which, notwithstanding its petty faults of local government, is still the freest and noblest town the globe has ever borne. People talk of the "freedom" of the country, and my qumonda host, the Country Mouse, is perpetually boasting of his "crust of bread and liberty." But except the not very valuable license to wear shabby old clothes, I am at a loss to discover wherein the special freedom of rural life consists. You are certainly watched, and your actions, looks, and behaviour commented on fifty times more by your idle neighbours in the country, gasping for gossip, than by your busy neighbours in

town, who never trouble themselves to turn their heads when you pass them in the street, or even to find out your name if you live next door. In the country, you have generally the option of going on either of three or four roads. In London you have the choice of as many thousand streets. In the country you may "kill something" whenever you take your walks abroad, if that special privilege of the British gentleman be dear to your soul, and you care to shoot, hunt, or fish. Or, if you belong to the softer sex or sort, you may amuse yourself in your garden or shrubbery, play tennis, teach in the village school, or pay a visit to some country neighbour who will bore you to extinction. In London you have ten times as large a choice of occupations, and five hundred times as pleasant people to visit; seeing that in the country even clever men and women grow dull, and in town the most stupid get *frotté* with other people's ideas and humour.

'Again—and this is a most important consideration in favour of London—when a man has no particular bodily pain or mental affliction, and is not in want of money, the worst evil which he has to dread is *ennui*. To be bored is the "one great grief of life" to people who have no other grief. But can there be any

question whether *ennui* is better avoided in London or in the country? Even in the month of August, as somebody has remarked, "when London is 'empty,' there are always more people in it than anywhere else;" and where there are people there must be the endless play of human interests and sympathies. Nay, for my part, I find a special gratification in the cordiality wherewith my acquaintances, left stranded like myself by chance in the dead season, hail me when we meet in Pall Mall like shipwrecked mariners on a rock; and in the respectful enthusiasm wherewith I am greeted in the half-deserted shops, where in July I made my modest purchases unnoticed and unknown. In the country, on the contrary, *Ennui* stalks abroad all the year round, and the puerile ceremonies wherewith the ignorant natives strive to conjure away the demon—the dismal tea and tennis parties, the deplorable archery meetings, and above all, the really frightful antediluvian institution, called "Spending a Day"—only place us more helplessly at his mercy. We conjugate the reflective verb "to be Bored," in all moods and tenses: not in the light and airy way of townsfolk, when they trivially observe they were "bored at such a party last night," or decline to be "bored by going to hear such a preacher on

Sunday morning," but sadly and in sober earnest, as men who recognize that boredom is a chronic disease from which they have no hope of permanent relief. There is, in short, the same difference between *ennui* in the country and *ennui* in town, as between thirst in the midst of Sahara, and thirst in one's home, where one may ring the bell at any moment and call for soda water.'

So speaks the modern Town Mouse, describing the more superficial and obvious advantages of his abode over those of his friend in the country. And (equally on the surface of things) straightway replies—

COUNTRY MOUSE.

'There is some sense in these boasts of my illustrious friend and guest, but against them I think I can produce equivalent reasons for preferring the country. In the first place, if he live *faster* I live *longer;* and I have better health than he all the time. My lungs are not clogged with smoke, my brain not addled by eternal hurry and interruption, my eyes not dimmed by fog and gaslight into premature blindness. While his limbs are stiffening year by year till he can only pace along his monotonous pavement,

I retain till the verge of old age much of the agility and vigour wherewith I walked the moors and climbed the mountains in my youth. He is pleased at having twenty times as many sensations in a day as I; but if nineteen out of the twenty be jarring noises, noxious smells, plague, worry, and annoyance, I am quite content with my humbler share of experience. Even if his thick-coming sensations and ideas be all pleasant, I doubt if he ever have the leisure necessary to enjoy them. Very little would be gained by the most exquisite dinner ever cooked, and the finest wines ever bottled, if a man should be obliged to gobble them standing up, while his train, just ready to start, is whistling behind him. Londoners *gulp* their pleasures, we country folk *sip* such as come in our way; think of them a long time in advance with pleasant anticipation, and ruminate on them and talk them over for months afterwards. I submit that even a few choice gratifications thus carefully prized, add to a man's sense of happiness as much as double the number which are received when he is too weary to enjoy, or too hurried to recall them.

'Again, the permanent and indefeasible delights of the country seem somehow to be more indispensable to human beings than the

high-strung gratifications of the town. The proof of this fact is that while *we* can live at home all the year round, Town Mice, after eight or nine months' residence at longest, begin to hate their beloved city, and pine for the country. Even when they are in the full fling of the London season, it is instructive to notice the enthusiasm and sparkle wherewith they discuss their projected tours a few weeks later among Swiss mountains, or up Norwegian fiords. Also it may be observed how of all the entertainments of the year the most popular are the Flower-shows, and the afternoon Garden-parties in certain private grounds. Even the wretched unmanly sport of Hurlingham has become fashionable, chiefly because it has brought men and women out of London for a day into the semblance of a country place. Had the gentlemen shot the poor pigeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields or Bloomsbury, the admiring spectators of their prowess would have been exceedingly few. Nay, it is enough to watch in any London drawing-room wherein may stand on one table a bouquet of the costliest hot-house flowers, and on the other a bowl of primroses in March, of hawthorn in May, and of purple heather in July, and see how every guest will sooner or later pay some little affectionate attention to the vase which brings

the reminiscence of the fields, woods, and mountains, taking no notice at all of the gorgeous azaleas and pelargoniums, gardenias and camellias in the rival nosegay. It is very well to boast of the "perfection" and "finish" of London life, but the "perfection" fails to supply the first want of nature—fresh air; and the "finish" yet waits for a commencement in cheerful sunlight unobscured by smoke and fog, and a silence which shall not be marred all day and night by hideous, jarring, and distracting sounds. What man is there who would prefer to live in one of the Venetian palace chambers, gorgeously decorated and adorned with frescoes and marbles, and gilding and mirrors, but with a huge high wall, black, damp and slimy, within two feet of the windows, shutting out the light of day and the air of heaven, rather than in a homely English drawing-room, furnished with nothing better than a few passable water-colour sketches and some chintz-covered chairs and sofas, but opening down wide on a sunny garden, with an acacia waving its blossoms over the emerald sward, and the children weaving daisy chains round the neck of the old collie who lies beside them panting with the warmth of the weather and his own benevolence?

'Then as to the dulness of our country conversation, wherewith my distinguished friend the Town Mouse has rather impolitely taunted us. Is it because we take no particular interest in his gossip of the clubs that he thinks himself justified in pronouncing us stupid? Perhaps we also think him a trifle local (if we may not say provincial) in his choice of topics, and are of opinion that the harvest prospects of our country, and the relations of agricultural labour to capital, are subjects quite as worthy of attention as his petty and transitory *cancans* about articles in reviews, quarrels, scandals, and jests. East Indians returning to Europe after long absence are often amazed that nobody at home cares much to hear why Colonel Chutnee was sent from Curriepoor to Liverabad, or how it happened that Mrs. Cayenne broke off her engagement with old General Temperatesty. And in like manner perhaps a Londoner may be surprised without much reason that his intensely interesting "latest intelligence" is rather thrown away upon us down in the shires.'

These, as we premised, are the obvious and salient advantages and disadvantages of Town and Country life respectively observed and recognized by everybody who thinks on the

subject. It is the purport of the present paper to pass beyond them to some of the more subtle and less noticed features of either mode of existence, and to attempt to strike some kind of balance of the results as regards individuals of different character and the same individual in youth and old age.

When we ask seriously the question which, of any two ways of spending our years, is the most conducive to Happiness! we are apt to overlook the fact that it is not the one which supplies us with the most numerous isolated items of pleasure, but the one of which the whole current tends to maintain in us the *capacity* for enjoyment at the highest pitch and for as long a time as possible. There is something exceedingly stupid in our common practice of paying superabundant attention to all the external factors of happiness down to the minutest rose-leaf which can be smoothed out for our ease, and all the time forgetting that there must always be an internal factor of *delightability* to produce the desired result; just as there must be an eye wherewith to see, as well as candles to give light. The faculty of *taking* enjoyment, of *finding* sweetness in the rose, grandeur in the mountain, refreshment in food and rest, interest in books, and happiness in loving and being

loved, is—as we must perceive the moment we consider it—indefinitely more precious than any gratification which can be offered to the senses, the intellect, or the affections; just as eyesight is more valuable than the finest landscape, and the power of loving better than the homage of a world. Yet, as Shelley lamented—

> Rarely, rarely comest thou,
> Spirit of Delight;

and we allow it to remain absent from our souls, and grow accustomed to living without it, while all the time we are plodding on multiplying gratifications and stimulants, while the delicate and evanescent sense they are meant to please is becoming numb and dead. We often, indeed, make religio-philosophical remarks on the beautiful patience and cheerfulness of sufferers from agonizing disease, and we smile at the unfailing hilarity wherewith certain Mark Tapleys of our acquaintance sustain the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. We quote, with high approval, the poet who sings that—

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage.

Nevertheless, the singular phenomenon of evident, unmistakable Happiness enjoyed, in despite of circumstances, never seems to teach

us how entirely secondary all objective circumstances needs must be to the subjective side of the question; and how much more rational it would be on our part to look first to securing for ourselves the longest and completest tenure of the internal elements of enjoyment, before we turn our attention to the attainment of those which are external.

The bearing of this remark on the present subject is, of course, obvious. Is it Life in Town or Life in the Country, wherein the springs of happiness flow with perennial freshness, and wherein the Spirit of Delight will burn brightest and longest? To solve this problem we must turn over in our minds the various conditions of such a state of mind and spirits, the most generally recognized of which is bodily Health.

There is not the smallest danger in these days that any inquirer, however careless, should overlook the vast importance of physical soundness to every desirable mental result. Indeed, on the contrary; we may rather expect shortly to find our teachers, treating Disease as the only real delinquency in the world, and all crimes and vices as mere symptoms of disordered nerves or overloaded stomach—kleptomania, dipsomania, homicidal mania, or something equally pardonable on the part of automata like ourselves. Seriously

speaking, a high state of health, such as the 'Original' described himself as having attained, or even something a few degrees less perfect, is, undoubtedly, a potent factor in the sum of happiness, causing every separate sensation—sleeping, waking, eating, drinking, exercise, and rest—to be delightful; and the folly of people who seek for Happiness, and yet barter away Health for Wealth or Fame, or any other element thereof, is like that of a man who should sell gold for dross. Admitting this, it would seem to follow that Life in the Country, generally understood to be the most wholesome, must be the most conducive to the state of enjoyment. But there are two points not quite cleared up on the way to this conclusion. First, bodily health seems to be, to some people, anything but the blessing it ought to be, rendering them merely coarse and callous, untouched by those finer impulses and sentiments which pain has taught their feebler companions, and so shutting them out from many of the purest and most spiritual joys of humanity. Paley questioned whether the sum of happiness would not be increased to most of us by one hour of moderate pain in every twenty-four; and though few would directly ask for the increment of enjoyment so attained, there are perhaps still fewer

who would desire to unlearn all the lessons taught in the school of suffering, or find themselves with the gross, ox-like nature of many a farmer or publican, whose rubicund visage bears testimony to his vigorous appetite and to the small amount of pain, sorrow or anxiety which his own or any body else's troubles have ever caused him. Taking it all in all, it seems doubtful, then, whether the most invariably robust people are really much happier than those with more fluctuating health who have taken from the bitter cup the sweet drop which is always to be found at the bottom by those who seek it. For those, unhappiest of all, whom disease has only rendered more selfish and self-centred and rebellious, there is of course, no comparison possible.

And, secondly, Is it thoroughly proved that country life is invariably healthier than the life of towns? The maladies arising from bad air, late hours, and that over-work and over-strain which is the modern Black Death, are of course unknown in the calm-flowing existence of a rural squire and his family. But there are other diseases which come of monotonous repose, unvarying meals, and general *tedium vitæ*, quite as bad as the scourges of the town. Of all sources of ill-health, I am inclined to think lack of

interest in life, and the constant society of dull and disheartening people, the very worst and most prolific. Undoubtedly it is so among the upper class of women, and the warnings of certain American physicians against the adoption by girls of any serious or earnest pursuit, seems painfully suggestive of a well-founded alarm lest their own lists of hysterical and dyspeptic patients should show a falling off under the new impetus given to women's work and study. In London, people have very much less leisure to think about their ailments, or allow the doctor's visit to become a permanent institution, as is so often the case in country houses. The result is that (whether or not statistics prove the existence of more sickness in town than in the country), at least we do not hear of eternally ailing people in London nearly so often as we do in country neighbourhoods, where there are always to be found as stock subjects of local interest and sympathy, old Mr. A.'s gout, and Lady B.'s liver complaint; and those sad headaches which yet fortunately enable poor Mrs. C. to spend at least one day in the week in her darkened bedroom out of the reach of her lord's intolerable temper.* Be it remarked also

* I have heard this peculiar but common form of feminine affliction classified as the 'Bad Husband Headache.'

that the maladies which townsfolk mostly escape, namely, dyspepsia, hysteria, and neuralgia, are precisely those which exercise the most direct and fatal influence on human powers of enjoyment; whereas the ills to which flesh is heir in great cities, among the upper and well-fed classes, are generally more remotely connected therewith.

But—*pace* the doctors and all their materialistic followers—I question very much whether bodily health, the mere absence of physical disease, be nearly as indispensable a condition of happiness, as certain peculiarities of the mental and moral constitution. The disposition to Anxiety, for instance, which reduces many lives to a purgatory of incessant care—about money, about the opinion of society, or about the health and well-being of children—is certainly a worse drawback to peace and happiness than half the diseases in the Registrar General's list. This anxious temperament is commonly supposed to be fostered and excited in towns, and laid to sleep in the peaceful life of the country; and if it were certainly and invariably so, I think the balance of happiness between the two would well-nigh be settled by that fact alone. But again there is something to be said on the side of the town. An African

traveller has described to me how, after months exposed to the interminable perils from man and brute and climate, he felt, after his first night on board a homeward-bound English ship, a reaction from the tension of anxiety which revealed to himself the anguish he had been half-unconsciously enduring for many months. In like manner the city man or the statesman feels, when at last he takes his summer holiday, under what tremendous pressure of care he has been living during the past year, or session, in London; and he compares it, naturally enough, with the comparatively careless life of his friend, the country squire. But every one in London does not run a race for political victory or social success, and there are yet some sober old ways of business—both legal and mercantile—which do not involve the alternative of wealth or ruin every hour. For such people I apprehend London life is actually rather a cure for an anxious temperament than a provocative of care. There is no time for dwelling on topics of a painful sort, or raising spectres of possible evils ahead. Labours and pleasures, amusements and monetary worries, succeed each other so rapidly that the more serious anxieties receive less and less attention as the plot of London life thickens year by year. One nail drives out

another, and we are now and then startled to remember that there has been really for days and months a reasonable fear of disaster hanging over us to which we have somehow scarcely given a thought, while in the country it would have filled our whole horizon, and we should scarcely have forgotten it day or night.

And again, quite as important as bodily health and freedom from anxiety, is the possession of a certain child-like freshness of character; a simplicity which enables men and women, even in old age, to enjoy such innocent pleasures as come in their way without finding them pall, or despising them as not worth their acceptance. Great minds and men of genius seem generally specially gifted with this invaluable attribute of perennial youth; while little souls, full of their own petty importance and vanities, lose it before they are well out of the schoolroom. The late sculptor, John Gibson (whose works will be, perhaps, appreciated when all the monstrosities of modern English statuary are consigned to the lime-kiln), used to say in his old age that he wished he could live over again every day and hour of his past life precisely as he had spent it. Let the reader measure what this means in the mouth of a man of transparent veracity, and it will appear that the

speaker must needs have carried on through his seventy years the freshness of heart of a boy, never wearied by his ardent pursuit of the Beautiful, and supported by the consciousness that this pursuit was not wholly in vain. People who are always 'looking for the next thing,' taking each pleasure not as pleasure *per se*, but merely as a useful stepping-stone to something else which may possibly be pleasure, or as a subject to be talked of; people who are always climbing, like boys at a fair, up the slippery pole of ambition, cannot possibly know the meaning of such genuine and ever fresh enjoyment.

Is a man likely to grow more or less simple-hearted and single-minded in Town or in the Country? Alas! there can be little or no doubt that London life is a sad trial to all such simplicity; and that nothing is more difficult than to preserve, in its hot stifling atmosphere, the freshness and coolness of any flower of sentiment, or the glory of any noble, unselfish enthusiasm. Social wear and tear, and the tone of easy-letting-down commonly adopted by men of the world towards any lofty aspiration, compels those who would fain cherish generous and conscientious motives to cloak them under the guise of a hobby or a whim,

and before many years are over, the glow and bloom of almost every enthusiasm is rubbed off and spoiled.

But it is time to pass from the general subjective conditions of happiness common to us all, to those individual tastes and idiosyncrasies which are probably more often concerned in the preference of town or country life. We are all of us mingled of pretty nearly the same ingredients of character, but they are mixed in very different proportions in each man's brewing, and in determining the flavour of the compound everything depends on the element which happens to prevail. By some odd chance few of us, notwithstanding all our egotism and self-study, really know ourselves well enough to recognize whether we are by nature gregarious or solitary; acted upon most readily by meteorological or by psychological influences; capable of living only on our affections, or requiring the exercise of our brains. We are always, for example, talking about the gloom or brightness of the weather, as if we were so many pimpernels, to whom the sun is everything and a cloudy day or a sharp east wind the most pitiable calamity. The real truth is, that to ninety-nine healthy Englishmen and women out of a hundred, atmospheric conditions are insignifi-

cant compared to social ones, and the spectacle of a single member of our family in the dumps, or even the suspicion that the servants are quarrelling in the kitchen, detracts more from our faculty of enjoyment than a fall of the barometer from Very Dry to Stormy. In the same way we talk about people 'loving the country' or 'loving the town,' just as if the character which fitted in and found its natural gratification in the one were qualified to enjoy quite equally the other. Obviously in some of us the passion for Nature and natural beauty is so prominent that if it be starved (as it must needs be in a great city) or only tantalized by the sight of pictures reminding us of woods and hills and fresh breezes when we are stifled and jostled in the crowded rooms of Burlington House or the Grosvenor Gallery, we miss so much out of life that nothing can make up for it, and no pleasures of the intellect in the company of clever people, or gratification of taste in the most luxurious home, is sufficient to banish the regret. A young branch swaying in the breeze of spring, and the song of the lark rising out of the thyme and the clover, are better than all the pictures, the concerts, the conversations which the town can offer. And just in the opposite way, there are others

amongst us in whom the æsthetic element is subordinate to the social; and who long to take a part in the world's work, rather than to stand by and watch the grand panorama of summer and winter move before them while they remain passive. Is it not patently absurd to talk as if persons so differently constituted as these could find happiness—the one where his ingrained passion for Nature is permanently denied its innocent and easy gratification—the other, where his no less deeply-rooted interest in the concerns of his kind is narrowed within the petty sphere of rural social life?

But let us now pass on, hoping that we have found the round man for the round hole, and the square man for the square one. What are the more hidden and recondite charms of the two modes of life, of which the Town Mouse and the Country Mouse have rehearsed the superficial characters? What is the meaning in the first place of that taste for 'Life at High Pressure,' against which W. R. Greg cautioned us, and Matthew Arnold inveighed? How was it that the sage Dr. Johnson felt undoubtedly a twinge of the same unholy passion when he remarked to the faithful Boswell how delightful it was to drive fast in a post-chaise,—in *such* a post-chaise, and over such roads as existed in his

time? I apprehend that the love for rapid movement comes from the fact that it always conveys to us a sense of vivid volition, and effectually stirs both our pulses and our brains, causing us not only to seem to ourselves, but actually to become, more intelligent. At first the bustle and hurry of London life bewilder the visitor, and, finding it impossible to think, move, and speak as fast as is needful, he feels as a feeble old lady might do arm-in-arm with Jack in his Seven-league boots. But after a little while he learns to step out mentally as rapidly as his neighbours, and thereby acquires the double satisfaction of the intrinsic pleasure of thinking quickly and not dwelling on ideas till they become tedious, and the further sense of gratified vanity in being as clever as other people. This last is again a curious source of metropolitan satisfaction. It is all very well to boast of having 'also dwelt in Arcadia.' Such pastoral pride is humility beside the conceit of being a thorough-bred Londoner. There may live many men with souls so dead as never to themselves to have said—anything signifying peculiar appropriation of the soil of Scotland, or of any other 'native land.' But who has ever yet met a Cockney who was not from the bottom to the top of his soul proud of being a

Londoner, and deeply convinced that he and his fellows can alone be counted as standing 'in the foremost files of time?' Of course whilst he is actually in London, he has no provocation to betray his self-satisfaction among people who can all make the same boast. But watch him the moment he passes into the country. Observe the pains he takes that the natives shall fully understand what manner of man, even a Londoner, they have the privilege of entertaining, and no doubt will remain as to how immensely superior he feels himself to those who habitually dwell 'far from the madding crowd.' If he wander into the remoter provinces, say of Scotland, Wales, or Ireland, there is always in his recognition of the hospitality shown to him, a tone like that of the shipwrecked apostle in Malta; 'the Barbarous people there showed us no small kindness.' He manages to convey by looks, words and manners, his astonishment at any vestiges of civilization which he may meet on those distant shores, and exhibits graceful forbearance in putting up with the delicious fresh fruit, cream, vegetables, and home-fed beef and mutton of his entertainers in lieu of the stale produce of the London shops. One such stranded Cockney I have known to remark that he 'observed' that

the eggs at N——, and at another country house where he occasionally visited, had in them a 'peculiar milky substance,' about whose merits he seemed doubtful; and another I have heard after landing at Holyhead on his return from Ireland, complacently comparing his watch (which had, like himself, faithfully kept London time during all his tour) with the clock in the station, and observing to his fellow-passengers, 'that there was not a single clock right in Dublin; they were all twenty minutes too slow, and when he went to Galway he found them still worse.'

Even if a man sincerely prefer country life, and transfer his abode from London to the rural districts, he still retains a latent satisfaction at having lived once in the very centre of human interests, close to the throbbing heart of the world. The old squire who has been too gouty and too indolent to run up to town for twenty years, will still brighten up at the names of the familiar streets and play-houses, and will tell anecdotes, the chief interest of which seems to lie in the fact that he formerly lodged in Jermyn Street, or bought his seals at the corner of Waterloo Place, or had his hair cut in Bond Street, preparatory to going to the play in Drury Lane.

As volunteers enjoy a field day with the manœuvres and marches, so a Londoner experiences a dim sense of pleasure in forming part of the huge army of four millions of human beings who are for ever moving hither and thither, and yet strangely bringing about, not confusion, but order. The Greek philosophers and statesmen who thought such a little tiny 'Polis' as Athens or Sparta (not an eighth part of one postal district of London) almost a miracle of divine order, would have fallen down and worshipped at the shrine of Gog and Magog for having provided that a whole nation should be fed, housed, clothed, washed, lighted, warmed, taught, and amused for years and generations in a single city eight miles long. It is impossible not to feel an ever fresh interest and even surprise in the solution of so marvellous a problem as this human ant-hill presents, and Londoners themselves, perhaps even more than their visitors, are wont to watch with pleasant wonder each occurrence which brings its magnitude to mind; the long quadruple train of splendid equipages filing through Hyde Park of a summer afternoon; the scene presented by the river at the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race; or the overwhelming spectacle of such crowds as greeted the Queen on her Jubilee.

The facility wherewith a busy-minded person, possessed of moderate pecuniary resources, can carry out almost any project in London, is another great source of the pleasure of town life. At every corner a cab, a hansom, an omnibus, an underground station, or a penny steamboat, is ready to convey him rapidly and securely to any part of the vast area; and a post-pillar or post-office, or telegraph office, to forward his letter, or card, or telegram. He has acquired the privilege of Briareus for doing the work of a hundred hands, while the scores of penny and half-penny newspapers give him the benefit of the hundred eyes of Argus to see how to do it.

Not many people seem to notice wherein the last and greatest of London pleasures, that of London society, has its special attraction. It is contrasted with the very best society which the Country can ever afford, by offering the charm of the *imprévu*. There are always indefinite possibilities of the most delightful and interesting new acquaintances, or of the renewal of old friendships in London; whereas even in the most brilliant circles in the country we are aware, before we enter a house, that our host's choice of our fellow-guests must have lain within a very narrow and restricted circle; and that if

a stranger should happily have fallen from the skies into the neighbourhood, his advent would have been proclaimed in our note of invitation. Now it is much more piquant to meet an agreeable person unexpectedly than by formal rendezvous; and for that large proportion of mankind who are not particularly agreeable, it is still more essential that they should be presented freshly to our acquaintance. Other things being equal, a Stranger Bore is never half so great a bore as a Familiar Bore, of whose boredom we have already had intimate and painful experience. There yet hangs about the Stranger Bore somewhat of the mists of early day, and we are a little while in piercing them and thoroughly deciding that he *is* a bore and nothing better. Often, indeed, for the first hour or two of acquaintanceship, he fails to reveal himself in his true colours, and makes remarks and tells anecdotes the dulness of which we shall only thoroughly recognize when we have heard them repeated on twenty other occasions. With our own Familiar Bore no illusion is possible. The moment we see him enter the room, we know everything that is going to be said for the rest of the evening, and Hope itself escapes out of Pandora's box. Thus even if there were proportionately as many bores in London as in

the provinces, we should still, in town, enjoy a constant change of them, which would considerably lighten the burden. This, however, is very far from being the case, and the stupid wives of clever men and the dull husbands of clever wives, who alone smuggle into the inner coteries (few people having the effrontery to omit them in their invitations) are so far rubbed up and instructed in the best means of concealing their ignorance, silliness, or stupidity, that they are often quite harmless and inoffensive, and even qualified to shine with a mild reflected lustre in rural society in the autumn. Certain immutable laws made and provided by society against bores are brought sooner or later to their knowledge. They do not tell stories more than five minutes long in the narration, nor rehearse jokes till they fancy they can recall the point, nor entertain their friends by an abridgment of their own pedigree, or by a catalogue of the ages, names, heights, and attainments in the Latin grammar of their hopeful offspring. To all this sort of thing the miserable visitor in the country is liable to be subjected in every house the threshold of which he may venture to cross; for even if his host and hostess be the most delightful people, they generally have some old uncle or aunt, or privileged and

pompous neighbour, with whom nobody has ever dared to interfere in his ruthless exercise of the power to bore, and who will fasten on a newcomer just as mosquitoes do on fresh arrivals at a seaport after having tormented all the old inhabitants.

And if London Bores are as lions with drawn teeth and clipped claws, London pleasant people on the other hand are beyond any doubt the pleasantest in the world; more true and kind and less eaten up by vanity and egotism than Parisians, and twice as agile-minded as the very cleverest German.

Again, a great charm of London is, that wealth is of so much less social weight there than anywhere else. It is singular what misapprehensions are current on this subject, and how apt are country people to say that money is everything in town, whereas the exact converse of the proposition is nearer the truth. In a country neighbourhood the man who lives in the largest house, drives the handsomest horses, and gives the most luxurious entertainments is allowed with little question to assume a prominent position, be he never so dull and never so vulgar; and though respect will still be paid to well-born and well-bred people of diminished or narrow fortune, their position as regards their

nouveau riche neighbours is every year less dignified or agreeable. Quite on the contrary in town; with no income beyond what is needful to subscribe to a club and wear a good coat, a man may take his place (hundreds *do* so take a place) in the most delightful circles, welcomed by all for his own worth or agreeability, for the very simple and sufficient reason that people like his society and want nothing more from him. In a city where there are ten thousand people ready to give expensive dinners, it is not the possession of money enough to entertain guests which can by itself make the owner an important personage, or cause the world to overlook the fact that he is a snob; nor will the lack of wealth prevent those thousands who are on the look-out only for a pleasant and brilliant companion from cultivating one be he never so poor. The distinction between the rural and the urban way of viewing a new acquaintance as regards both birth and fortune is very curiously betrayed by the habit of townsfolk to ask simply '*What* a man may be?' (meaning, 'Is he a lawyer, a *litterateur*, a politician, a clergyman—above all, is he a pleasant fellow?'); and that of country gentry invariably to inquire, '*Who* is he?' (meaning, Has he an estate, and is he related to the So-and-so's of Such a place?) It is not a little

amusing sometimes to witness the discomfiture of both parties when a bland old gentleman is introduced in London to some man of world-wide celebrity, whose antecedents none of the company ever dreamed of investigating, and the squire courteously intimates as the pleasantest thing he can think of to say, that he 'used to meet often in the hunting field a gentleman of that name who had a fine place in Cheshire;' or that, 'he remembers a man who must surely have been his father; a gentleman-commoner of Christchurch.'

For those men and women — numerous enough in the days — who hold rather pronounced opinions of the sort not relished in country circles, who are heretics regarding the religious or political creed of their relatives and neighbours, London offers the real Broad Sanctuary, where they may rest in peace, and be no more looked upon as black sheep, suspicious and uncomfortable characters, the 'gentleman who voted for Topsy Turvey at the last election,' or 'the lady who doesn't go to church on Sundays.' In town not only will their errors be overlooked, but they will find scores of pleasant and reputable persons who share the worst of them and go a great deal further, and in whose society they will soon

begin to feel themselves by comparison quite orthodox, and perhaps rather conservative characters.

And lastly, beside all the other advantages of London which I have recapitulated, there is one of which very little note is ever taken. If many sweet and beautiful pleasures are lost by living there, many sharp and weary pains also therein find a strange anodyne. There is no time to be very unhappy in London. Past griefs are buried away under the surface, since we may not show them to the unsympathizing eyes around; and present cares and sorrows are driven into dark corners of the mind by the crowd of busy every-day thoughts which inevitably take their place. A man may feel the heart-ache in the country, and wander mourning by the solitary shore, or amid the silent winter woods. But let him go, after receiving a piece of sad intelligence, into the busy London streets, and be obliged to pick his way amid the crowd; to pass by a score of brilliant shops, avoid being run over by an omnibus, give a penny to a street-sweeper, push through the children looking at Punch, close his ears to a German band, hail a hansom and drive to his office or his chambers, and at the end of the hour—how many thoughts will he have given to his

sorrow? Before it has had time to sink into his mind many days of similar fuss and business will have intervened; and by that time the edge of the grief will be dulled, and he will never experience it in its sharpness. Of the influence of this process, continually repeated, on the character, a good deal might be said; and there may be certainly room to doubt whether thus perpetually shirking all the more serious and solemn passages of life is conducive to the higher welfare. After we have suffered a good deal, and the readiness of youth to encounter every new experience and drink every cup to the dregs, has been exchanged for the dread of strong emotions and the weariness of grief which belong to later years, there is an immense temptation to spare our own hearts as much as we can; and London offers the very easiest way, without any failure of kindness, duty, or decorum, to effect such an end. Nevertheless, the sacred faculties of sympathy and unselfish sorrow are not things to be lightly tampered with, and it is to be feared that the consequences of any conscious evasion of their claims must always be followed by that terrible Nemesis, the hardening of our hearts and the disbelief in the sympathy of our neighbours. We have made love and friendship unreal to

ourselves, and it becomes impossible to continue to believe they are real to other people. Yet, I think, if the shelter be not wilfully or intentionally sought, if it merely come in the natural course of things that the business and variety of town life prevent us from dwelling on sorrows which cannot be lightened by our care, it seems a better alternative than the almost infinite durability and emphasis given to grief in the monotonous life of the country.

If these be the advantages of Town life, however, there are to be set against them many and grievous drawbacks. First, as the Country Mouse justly urges, half those quickly-following sensations and ideas which constitute the highly-prized rapidity of London life are essentially disagreeable in themselves, and might be dispensed with to our much greater comfort. In the country, for example, out of fifty sights, forty-nine at least are of pretty or beautiful objects, even where there is no particularly fine scenery. Woods, gardens, rivers, country roads, cottages, waggons, ploughs, cattle, sheep, and over all, always, a broad expanse of the blessed sky, with the pomps of sunrises and sunsets, and moonlight nights and snow-clad winter days—these are things on which everywhere (save in the Black Country, which is not the *country* at all)

the eye rests in peace and delight. In the town, out of the same number of glances of our tired eyeballs, we shall probably behold a score of huge advertisements, a line of hideous houses with a butcher's shop as the most prominent object, an omnibus and a brewer's dray, a score of bricklayers returning (slightly drunk) from dinner, and a handsome carriage with the unfortunate horses champing their gag-bits in agony from their tight bearing-reins while the coachman flicks them with his whip. In the country, again, out of fifty odours the great majority will be of fresh herbage, or hay, or potato or bean fields, or of newly-ploughed ground, or burning weeds or turf. In the town we shall endure the sickly smell of drains, of stale fish, of raw meat, of carts laden with bones and offal, the insufferable effluvium of the city cook-shops; and last —not least—pervading every street and shop and park, puffed eternally in our faces, the vilest tobacco. And finally, in the country, our ears are no less soothed and flattered than our senses of smelling and sight. The golden silence when broken at all is disturbed only by the noise of running waters, of cattle lowing, sheep bleating, thrushes, and larks, and cuckoos singing, rooks cawing on the return home at evening, or the exquisite 'sough' of the night wind as it passes

over the sleeping woods as in a dream. In the town we have the relentless roar and rattle of a thousand carts, cabs, drags, and omnibuses, the perpetual grinding of organs and hurdy-gurdies, the unintelligible and ear-piercing cries of the costermongers in the streets, and generally, to complete our misery, the jangle of a pianoforte heard through the thin walls of our house as if there were no partition between us and the detestable children who thump through their scales and polkas for six hours out of the twenty-four. Such are the sufferings of the senses in London,—surely worth setting against the luxuries it is supposed to command, but which it only commands for the rich, whereas neither rich nor poor have any immunity from the ugly sights, ugly smells, and ugly noises wherewith it abounds. But beyond these mortifications of the flesh, London entails on its thorough-going votaries a heavier punishment. Sooner or later on every one who really works in London there comes a certain pain, half physical, half mental, which seems to have its bodily seat somewhere about the diaphragm, and its mental place between our feelings and our intellect;—a sense, not of being tired and wanting rest, for that is the natural and wholesome alternative of all strong and sustained

exercise of our faculties—but of being 'like dumb driven cattle,' and of having neither power to go on nor to stop. We seem to be under some slave-master who whips us here and there, and forbids us to sit down and take breath. We want fresh air; but our walks through the crowded streets or parks only add fatigue to our eyes, and weariness and excitement to our brains. We need food,—but it does us little good; and sleep,—but we waken up before half the night is past with our brains busy already with the anxieties of the morrow. We are conscious we are using up brains, eyesight, health, everything which makes life worth possessing, and yet we are entangled in such a mesh of engagements and duties, that we cannot break loose. We can only break *down;* and that is what we pretty surely do when this state of things has lasted a little too long.

Perhaps the reader is inclined to say, Why not try the golden mean, the compromise between town and country, to be found in some *rus in urbe* in Fulham or Hampstead, or a villa a little way further, at Richmond or Norwood or Wimbledon? I beg leave humbly to contend that the venerable Aristotelian 'Meson' is as great a mistake in geography as in ethics, and that it will be generally found that people adopting the Half-way House

system of lodgment will be disposed to repeat the celebrated Scotch ode with slight variations. 'Their heart is'—in London; 'their heart is not,' —by any means, in Hampstead or Twickenham. Their days are spent either in waiting at railway stations to go in or out of town, or in the yet more tantalizing anticipation of friends who have promised to 'give them a day,' and for whom they have provided the modern substitute for the fatted calf, but who, on the particular morning of their engagement, are sure to be swept off their consciences by an unexpected ticket for the opera, which they 'could not enjoy if they had gone so far in the morning as dear Mr. A.'s delightful villa.' Of course, it is possible to live in the outer circle of real London, and have fresh air and comparative quiet, infinitely valuable. But he who goes further afield, the ambitious soul who dreams of cocks and hens, or even soars to a paddock and a cow, is destined to disillusion and despair. He tries to 'make the best of both worlds,' and he gets the worst of both. The genuine Londoner considers his proffers of hospitality as an imposition; and the genuine country cousin is indignant, on accepting them, to find how far is his residence from the exhibitions and the shops. His trees are black, his roses

cankered, and his soul embittered by the defalcations of friends, the blunders and extortions of cabmen, and his own infructuous effort to be always in two places at once.

Nor is the second and, apparently, more facile resource of the tired Londoner—that of quartering himself on his kind country friends for his holidays—very much more successful. The country would indeed be delightful for our Christmas fortnight, or our Easter or Whitsuntide week, if we were permitted to enjoy in it that repose we so urgently need and so fondly seek. We are quite enamoured, when we first turn our steps from the smoky city, with the trees and fields; and we enjoy indescribably our rides and drives and walks, the varied aspects of nature, and the beasts and birds wherewith we are surrounded. But one thing we have not bargained for, and that is—country Society. Of course we love our friends and relations in whose homes we are received with kindness and affection, whom we know to be the salt of the earth for goodness, and who love us enough to feel an interest even in our towniest gossip. But *their* country friends, the neighbouring gentlefolk, the clergyman's wife, the family doctor, the people who are invariably invited to meet us at the long formal country dinner!

This is the trial beneath which our new-found love of rural life is apt to succumb. Sir Cornewall Lewis's too famous *dictum* returns, slightly modified, to our memories—As 'life would be tolerable, but for its pleasures,' so the country would be enchanting, were it not for its society. Could we be allowed to live in the country, and see only our hosts, we should be as happy as kings and queens. But to fly, for the sake of rest and quiet, from the tables where we might have met some of the most brilliant men and women of the day, and then to find that we shall incur the disgrace of being unsociable curmudgeons, if we object to spend the afternoon in playing tennis with the rector's stupid daughters, and to dine afterwards at the house of a particularly dull and vulgar neighbour with whom we would fain avoid such acquaintance as may justify him in visiting us in town, this is surely an evil destiny! When, alas! will all the good and kind people who invite town friends to come and rest with them in the country forbear to make their acceptance the occasion for a round of rural dissipation, and believe that their weary brother would be only too glad, did civility permit, to inscribe on the door of his bedroom during his sojourn, the affecting Italian epitaph, *Implora Pace!*

The Country Mouse has naturally said as little as possible of the drawbacks of his favourite mode of existence—metaphorically speaking, the dampness of his 'Hollow Tree,' and its liability to be infested by Owls. It may be well to jot off a few of the less recognized offsets to the pleasures of rural life before listening to any eulogies thereof.

The real evil of country life I apprehend is this—the whole happiness or misery of it is so terribly dependent on the character of those with whom we live, that if we are not so fortunate as to have for our companions the best and dearest, wisest and pleasantest of men and women (in which case we may be far happier than in any other life in the world), we are infinitely worse off than we can ever be in town. One, two, or perhaps three, relatives and friends who form our permanent house-mates, make or mar all our days by their good or evil tempers, their agreeability or stupidity, their affection and confidence, or their dislike and jealousy. 'Être avec les gens qu'on aime cela suffit,' says Rousseau, and he speaks truth. But 'être avec les gens qu'on n'aime *pas*,' and buried in a dull country house with them, without any prospect of change, is as bad as having a millstone tied round our necks and

being drowned in the depth of the sea. In a town house, if the fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, scold and wrangle, if the husband be a bear or the wife a shrew, there is always the refuge of the outer circle of acquaintances wherein cheer and comfort, or, at least, variety and relief, may be found. Reversing the pious Dr. Watts' maxim, we cry:—

> Whatever brawls disturb the home,
> Let peace be in the street.

The Club is the shelter of henpecked man; a friend's house, or Marshall and Snellgrove's, the refuge of cockpecked woman. On the stormiest domestic debate, the advent of a visitor intervenes, throwing temporary oil on the waters, and compelling the belligerents to put off their quarrels and put on their smiles; and when the unconscious peacemaker has departed, it is often found difficult if not impossible, to take up the squabble just where it was left off. But there is no such luck for cross-grained people in country houses. Humboldt's 'Cosmos' contains several references to certain observations made by two gentlemen who passed a winter together on the inhospitable northern shores of Asia, and one of whom bore the alarming name of Wrangle. It

is difficult to imagine any trial more severe than that of spending the six dark months of the year with Wrangle on the Siberian coast of the Polar Sea. But this is a mere fancy sketch, whereas hundreds of unlucky English men and women spend their winters every year in country houses, limited, practically, to the society of a Mr., or a Mrs., Wrangle, who makes life a burden by everlasting fault-finding, squabbling, worry, suspicion, jar, and jolt. As regards children or dependent people, or the wives of despotic husbands, the case is often worse than this. By a terrible law of our nature, an unkindness, harshness, or injustice done once to anyone, has a frightful tendency to produce hatred of the victim—(I have elsewhere called the passion *heteropathy*)—and a restlessness to heap wrong on wrong, and accusation on accusation, to justify the first fault. Woe to the hapless step-child or orphan nephew or penniless cousin, or helpless and aged mother-in-law, who falls under this terrible destiny in a country house where there are few eyes to witness the cruelty and no tongue bold enough to denounce it! The misery endured by such beings, the poor young souls which wither under the blight of the perpetual unmerited blame, and the older sufferers mortified and humiliated in their

age, must be quite indescribable. Perhaps by no human act can truer charity be done than by resolutely affording moral support, if we can do no more, to such butts and victims; and, if it be possible, to take them altogether away out of their ill-omened conditions, and 'deliver him that is oppressed from the hand of the adversary.' It is astonishing how much may be done by very humble spectators to put a check to evils like these, even by merely showing their own surprise and distress in witnessing them; and, on the contrary, how deplorably ready are nine people out of ten to fall in with the established prejudices and unkindnesses of every house they enter.

Very little of this kind of thing goes on in towns. People are too busy about their own affairs and pleasures, and their feelings of all kinds are too much diffused among the innumerable men and women with whom they come in contact, to permit of concentrated dislike settling down on any inmate of their homes in the thick cloud it is apt to do in the country.

Here we touch, indeed, on one great secret of the difference of Town and Country life. All sentiments, amiable and unamiable, are more or less dissipated in town, and concentrated and deepened in the country. Even a

very trifling annoyance, an arrangement of hours of meals too late or too early for our health, a smoky chimney, a bad coachman, a door below stairs perpetually banged, assumes a degree of importance when multiplied by the infinite number of times we expect to endure it in the limitless monotony of country life. Our nerves become in advance irritated by all we expect to go through in the future, and the consequence is that a degree of heat enters into family disputes about such matters which greatly amazes the parties concerned to remember when the wear and tear of travel or of town life have made the whole mode of existence in a country home seem a placid stream, with scarcely a pebble to stir a ripple.

And now, at last, let us begin to seek out wherein lie the more hidden delights of the country life; the violets under the hedge which sweeten all the air, but remain half-unobserved even by those who would fain gather up the flowers. We return in thought to one of those old homes, bosomed in its ancestral trees and with the work-day world far enough away behind the park palings so that the sound of wheels is never heard save when some friend approaches by the smooth-rolled avenue. What is the key-note of the life led by the men and

women who have grown from childhood to manhood and womanhood in such a place, and then drop slowly down the long years which will lead them surely at last to that bed in the green churchyard close by, where they shall 'sleep with their fathers'? That 'note' seems to me to be a peculiar sense—exceeding that of mere calmness—of *stability*, of a repose of which neither beginning nor end are in sight. Instead of a 'changeful world,' this is to them a world where no change comes, or comes so slowly as to be imperceptible. Almost everything which the eye rests upon in such a home is already old, and will endure for years to come, probably long after its present occupants are under the sod. The house itself was built generations since, and its thick walls look as if they would defy the inroads of time. The rooms were furnished, one, perhaps, at the father's marriage; another, tradition tells us, by a famous great-grandmother; the halls—no one remembers by whom or how long ago. The old trees bear on their boles the initials of many a name which has been inscribed long years also on the churchyard stones. The garden with its luxuriant old-fashioned flowers and clipped box borders and quaint sun-dial, has been a garden so long that the rich soil bears blossoms

with twice the perfume of other flowers; and as we pace along the broad terraced walks in the twilight, the odours of the well-remembered bushes of lavender and jessamine and cistus (each growing where it has stood since we were born), fall on our senses like the familiar note of some dear old tune. The very sounds of the landrail in the grass, the herons shrieking among their nests, the rooks darkening the evening sky, the cattle driven in to milking and lowing as they go, all in some way suggest the sense, not of restlessness and turmoil like the noises of the town, but of calm and repose and the unchanging order of an 'abode of ancient Peace.'

Then the habits of the owners of such old seats are sure to fall into a sort of rhythm. There are the lesser beats at intervals through the long day, when the early labourer's bell, and the gong at nine o'clock, and one o'clock, and seven o'clock, sound the call to prayers and to meals. And there are the weekly beats, when Sunday makes the beautiful refrain of the psalm of life. And yet again, there are the half-yearly summer strophe and winter antistrophe of habits of each season, taken up and laid down with unfailing punctuality, while the family life oscillates like a pendulum between

the first of May, which sees the domestic exodus into the fresh, vast old drawing-room, and the first of November which brings the return into the warm oak-pannelled library. To violate or alter these long-established rules and precedents scarcely enters into the head of any one, and the child hears the old servants (themselves the most dear and permanent institutions of all) speak of them almost as if they were so many laws of nature. Thus he finds life from the very beginning set for him to a kind of music, simple and beautiful in its way, and he learns to think that 'Order is Heaven's first law,' and that Change will never come over the placid tenor of existence. The difficulty to him is to realize in after years that any vicissitudes have really taken place in the old home, that it has changed owners, or that the old order has given place to new. He almost feels—thinking perhaps of his mother in her wonted seat,—that Shelley's dreamy philosophy must be true

> That garden sweet, that lady fair,
> And all bright shapes and odours there,
> In truth have never passed away;
> 'Tis we, 'tis ours, have changed, not they.

The anticipation of perpetual variety and change which is the lesson commonly taught to children by town-life,—the Micawber-like

expectation of 'something turning up,' to amuse or distract them, and for which they are constantly in a waiting frame of mind, is precisely reversed for the little scion of the old county family. For him nothing is ever likely to turn up beyond the ordinary vicissitudes of fair weather and foul, the sickness of his pony, the death of his old dog, or the arrival of his new gun. All that is to be made out of life he invents for himself in his sports and his rambles, till the hour arrives when he is sent to school. And when the epochs of school and college are over, when he returns as heir or master, life lays all spread out before him in a long straight honourable road, all his duties and his pleasures lying by the wayside, ready for his acceptance. For the girl there is often even longer and more unbroken monotony, lasting (unless she marry) into early womanhood and beyond it. Nothing can exceed the *eventlessness* of many a young lady's life in such a home. Her walks to her village school, or to visit her cottage friends in their sicknesses and disasters; her rides and drives along the familiar roads which she has ridden and driven over five hundred times already; the arrival of a new book, or of some old friend (more often her parent's contemporary than her own), make up the sum of her excitements, or even

expectations of excitement, perhaps, through all the years when youth is most eager for novelty, and the outer world seems an enchanted place. The effects on the character of this extreme regularity and monotony, this life at Low Pressure, vary, of course, in different individuals. Upon a dull mind without *motu proprio* or spring of original ideas, it is, naturally, depressing enough; but it is far from equally injurious to those possessed of some force of character, provided they meet the affection and reasonable indulgence of liberty without which the heart and intellect can no more develop healthfully than a baby can thrive without milk, or a child's limbs grow agile in swaddling clothes. The young mind slowly working out its problems for itself, unwarped by the influence (so enormous in youth), of thoughtless companions, and devouring the great books of the world, ferreted out of a miscellaneous library by its own eager appetite and self-guided taste, is perhaps ripening in a healthier way than the best taught town child with endless 'classes,' and masters for every accomplishment under the sun. Even the imagination is better cultivated in loneliness, when the child, through its solitary rambles by wood and shore, spins its gossamer webs of fancy, and invents tales of heroism and

wonder such as no melodrama or pantomime ever yet brought to the town child's exhausted brain. Then the affections of the country child are concentrated on their few objects with a passionate warmth of which the feelings of the town child, dissipated amidst scores of friends and admirers, affords no measure whatever. The admiration amounting to worship paid by many a little lonely girl to some older woman who represents to her all of grace and goodness she has yet dreamed, and who descends every now and then from some far-off Elysium to be a guest in her home, is one of the least read and yet surely one of the prettiest chapters of innocent human sentiment. As to the graver and more durable affections nourished in the old home, the fond attachment of brothers and sisters; the reverence for the father, the love—purest and deepest of all earthly loves, of mother for child and child for mother,—there can be little doubt that their growth in the calm, sweet country life must be healthier and deeper rooted than it can well be elsewhere.

And finally, almost certainly, such a peaceful and solitary youth soon enters the deeper waters of the moral and spiritual life, and breathes religious aspirations which have in them, in those early years, the freshness and the holiness

of the morning. Happy and good must, indeed, be that later life from the heights of which any man or woman can dare to look back on one of these lonely childhoods without a covering of the face. Talk of hermitages or monasteries! The real nursery of religion is one of these old English homes, where every duty is natural, easy, beautiful; where the pleasures are so calm, so innocent, so interwoven with the duties that the one need scarcely be defined from the other; and where the spectacle of Nature's loveliness is for ever suggesting the thought of Him who built the blue dome of heaven, and scattered over all the ground his love-tokens of flowers. The happy child dwelling in such a home with a father and mother who speak to it sometimes of God and the life to come, but do not attempt to intrude into that Holy of Holies, a young soul's love and penitence and resolution, is the place on earth, perhaps, best fitted to nourish the flame of religion. Of the cruelty and wickedness and meanness of the world the child hears only as of the wild beasts or poisonous reptiles who may roam or crawl in African deserts. They are too far off to force themselves on attention as dreadful problems of the Sphinx to be solved on pain of moral death. Even sickness, poverty, and death

appear oftenest as occasions for the kindly and helpful sympathy of parents and guides.

To turn to lighter matters. Of course among the first recognized pleasures of the country is the constant intercourse with, or rather *bathing in*, Nature. We are up to the lips in the ocean of fresh air, grass, and trees. It is not one beautiful object, or another, which attracts us (as sometimes happens in town), but without being interrupted by thinking of them individually, they influence us *en masse*. Dame Nature has taken us on her lap, and soothes us with her own lullaby. Probably, on the whole, country folks admire each separate view and scrap of landscape less than their visitors from the town, and criticise it as little as schoolboys do their mother's dress. But they love Nature as a whole, and her real influence appears in their genial characters, their healthy nervous systems, and their optimist opinions. Nor is it by any means only inanimate nature wherewith they are concerned. Not to speak of their poorer neighbours (of whom they know much more, and with whom they usually live in far more kindly relations than townsfolk with theirs), they have incessant concern with brutes and birds. How much, to some of us, the leisurely watching of stately cattle, gentle sheep, and

playful lambs, the riding and driving of generous, kindly-natured horses and the companionship of loving dogs, adds to the sum of the day's pleasures and tunes the mind to its happiest keynote, it would be difficult to define. For my own part, I have never ceased to wonder how Christian divines have been able to picture Heaven and leave it wholly unpeopled by animals. Even for their own sakes (not to speak of justice to the oft ill-treated brutes), would they not have desired to give their humble companions some little corner in their boundless sky? A place with perpetual music going on and not a single animal to caress—even those which Mahomet promised his followers,—his own camel, Balaam's ass, and Tobit's dog—would, I think, be a very incomplete and unpleasant paradise indeed!

It has often been said that the passion of Englishmen for field sports is really due to this love of Nature and of animals; that, like sheep-dogs (who, when they are not trained to guard sheep, will, by an irresistible impulse, follow and harry them), they feel compelled to have *something to do* with hares and foxes and partridges and grouse, and salmon; and they find that the only thing to be done is to course and hunt and shoot and angle for them. Into this

mystery I cannot dive. The propensity which can make kind-hearted men (as many sportsmen unquestionably are) not merely endure to kill, but actually take pleasure in killing, innocent living things, and changing what is so beautiful in life and joy, into what is so ineffably sad and piteous wounded and dying, remains always to me utterly incomprehensible. But it is simply a fact that lads trained from boyhood to take pleasure in such 'sports,' and having, I doubt not, an 'hereditary set of the brain' towards them, like so many greyhounds or pointers, never feel the *ribrezzo* or the remorse of the bird or beast-murderer, but, escaping all reflection, triumph in their own skill, and at the same time enjoy the woods and fields and river-sides where their quarry leads them. To do them justice,—as against many efforts lately made to confound them with torturers of a very different class,—they know little of the pain they inflict, and they endeavour eagerly to make that pain as brief as possible. Nevertheless, Sport is an inexplicable passion to the non-sporting mind; and moreover one not very easy to contemplate with philosophical forbearance, much less with admiration.

A larger source of wonder is it to reflect that this same unaccountable passion for killing

pheasants and pursuing foxes has so deep a root in English life, that its arrest and disappointment by such a change of the Game laws as would lead to the abolition of game, would practically revolutionize all our manners. The attraction of the towns already preponderates over that of the country ; but till lately, the grouse have had the honour of proroguing annually the British Senate, and the partridges, the pheasants, the woodcocks, and the foxes, induce pretty nearly every man who can afford to shoot or hunt them, to bring his family to the country during the season wherein they are to be pursued. Of course women, left to themselves, would mostly choose to spend their winters in town, and their summers from May till November, in the country. But Sport determines the Session of Parliament, and the Session determines the season ; and as women love the London Season quite as much as men like fox-hunting, both parties are equally bound to the same unfortunate division of time, and year after year passes, and the lilacs, and laburnums and hawthorns, and limes in the old country homes waste their loveliness and their sweetness unseen, while the little children pine in Belgravian and South Kensington mansions when they ought to be

romping among their father's hay-fields, and galloping their ponies about his park. All these arrangements, and further, the vast establishments of horses and hounds, the enormous expenditure on guns, and game-keepers and beaters, and game-preserving—the sole business of thousands of working-men, and the principal occupation and interest of half the gentlemen in the country—would be swept away by a stroke.

By some such change as this, or, more probably, by the pressure of a hundred sources of change, it is probable, nay, it is certain, that the old form of country life (which I have been describing, perhaps, rather as it was a few years ago than it is now), will pass away and become a thing of memory. When that time arrives, I cannot but think that England and the world will lose a phase of human existence which, with all its lights and shadows, has been, perhaps, the most beautiful and perfect yet realized on earth. Certainly it has offered to many a happiness, pure, stable, dignified, and blameless, such as it will be hard to parallel in any of the novel types of high-pressure modern life.

And, on the other hand, there is nothing so mournful as the life of an old ancestral home in

the country! Everything reminds us of the lost, the dead who once called these stately chambers their habitations, whose voices once echoed through the halls, and for whose familiar tread we seem yet to wait; whose entrance, as of yore, through one of the lofty doors would scarcely surprise us; whom we almost expect, when we return after long absence, to see rising from their accustomed seats with open arms to embrace us, as in the days gone by. The trees they planted, the walks and flower-beds they designed; the sword which the father brought back from his early service; the tapestry the mother wrought through her long years of declining health; the dog grown blind and old, the companion of walks which shall never be taken again; the instrument which once answered to a sweet touch for ever still—these things make us feel Death and change as we never feel them amid the instability and eager interests of town existence. All things remain as of old 'since the fathers fell asleep.' The leaves of the woods come afresh and then fade; the rooks come cawing home; the church bells ring, and the old clock strikes the hour. Only there is one chair pushed a little aside from its wonted place, an old horse turned out to graze in peace for his latter days; a bedroom

upstairs into which no one goes, save in silent hours, unwatched and furtively.

As time goes by, and one after another of those who made youth blessed have dropped away, and we begin to count the years of those who remain, and watch grey hairs thickening on heads we remember golden, and talk of the hopes and ambitions of early days as things of the past—things which might have been, but now, we know, will never be on earth—when all this comes to pass, then the sense of the *tragedy* of life becomes too strong for us. The dear home, loved so tenderly, is for us little better than the cenotaph of the lost and dead; the warning to ourselves that over all our busy schemes and hopes the pall will soon come down—'the night cometh when no man can work.'

I believe it is this deep, sorrowful sense of all that is most sad and most awful in our mortal lot—a sense which we escape amid the rushing to and fro of London, but which settles down on our souls in such a home as I have pictured, which makes the country unendurable to many, as the shadows of the evening lengthen. To accept it, and look straight at the grave towards which they are walking down the shortened vista of their years, taxes men's courage

and faith beyond their strength, and they fly back to the business and the pleasures wherein such solemn thoughts are forgotten and drowned. And yet beneath our cowardice there is the longing that our little race should round itself once again to the old starting point; that where we spent our blessed childhood, and rested on our mother's breast, and lisped our earliest prayers, there also we should lay down the burden of life, and repent its sins, and thank the Giver for its joys, and fall asleep,—to awaken, we hope, in the eternal Home.

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